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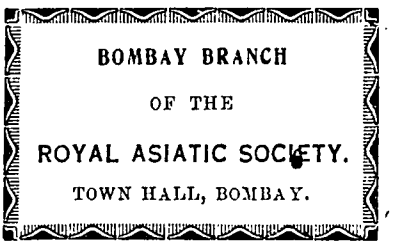

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THE STORY

OF

THE DIAMOND NECKLACE

TOLD IN DETAIL FOR THE FIRST TIME

CHIEFLY BY THE AID OF ORIGINAL LETTERS, OFFICIAL AND OTHER DOCUMENTS, AND CONTEMPORARY MEMOIRS RECENTLY MADE PUBLIC;

AND COMPRISING

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF THE COUNTESS DE LA MOTTE, PRETENDED CONFIDANT OF MARIE-ANTOINETTE, AND PARTICULARS OF THE CAREERS OF THE OTHER ACTORS IN THIS REMARKABLE DRAMA.

By HENRY VIZETELLY.

Illustrated with an exact representation of the Diamond Necklace, and a portrait of the Countess de la Motte, engraved on steel.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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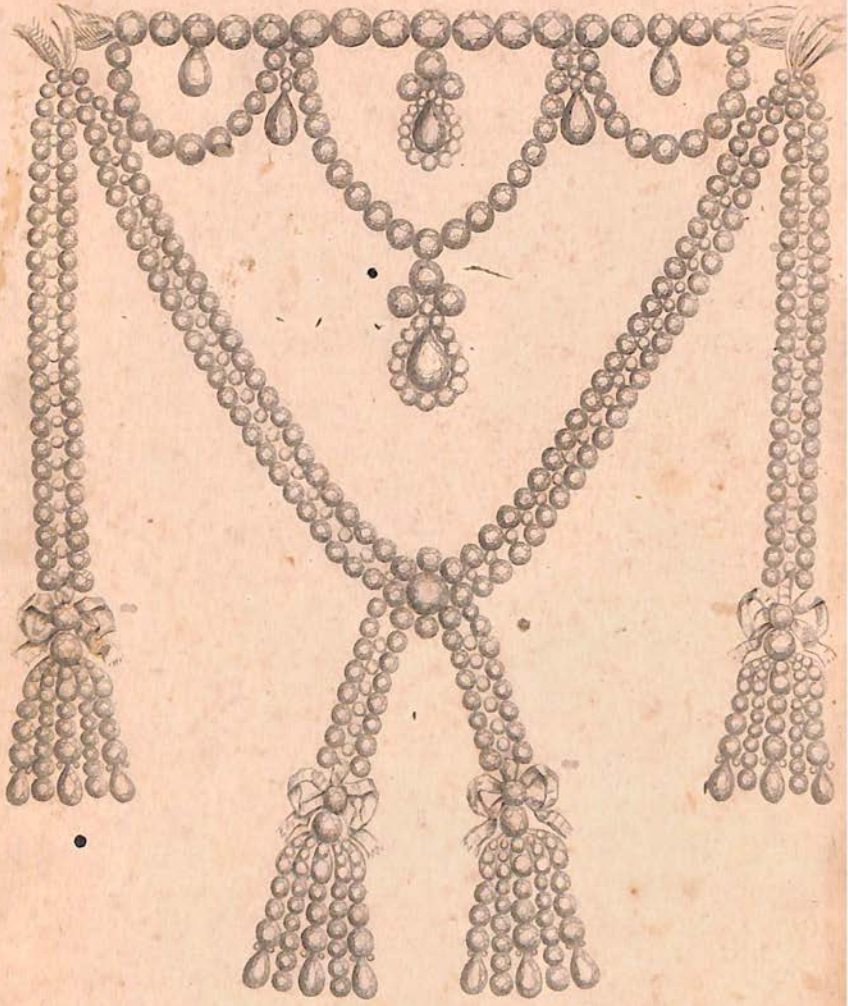

The Diamond Necklace

(The Stones one-third their natural size)

From a fac-simile of the Original Drawing made for Böhmer and Bassenge, jewellers to the French Crown.

THE

STORY OF THE DIAMOND NECKLACE.

XXVII.

1785.

CALUMNIES AGAINST THE QUEEN.—HER ANIMOSITY AGAINST THE CARDINAL DE ROHAN.

From the day she became queen, to the very hour of her death, and even after the grave had closed over her headless corse, the unhappy Marie-Antoinette was fated to be the victim of calumny. Her youthful levity was magnified into natural vice. Her most innocent amusements were made the objects of dark suspicion. Her friendships were so many criminal attachments. From Marly to Versailles, and from Versailles to Marly, slander pursued her. It penetrated the groves of Trianon, and insinuated that secret orgies, rivalling those of the "Parc aux cerfs," were carried on in this now favourite retreat. Indecent pamphlets referring

to her, written by hireling scribes, were circulated all over France. Libels against her were even forged in the police bureau. Scandalous songs were thrown in the "Œil-de-Bœuf," at the king's feet. Scandalous libels were placed under his dinner-napkin. Courtiers repeated the last foul epigram, the last lying report against the queen, in the royal ante-chambers, whispered it and chuckled over it even in the queen's presence; carried it from Versailles or Marly, post haste to Paris, to the different hostile *salons*, to the green-rooms of the theatre and the opera, and to the *cafés*, thence to be disseminated all over the capital, even to the *halles*; carried it to their country châteaux, and laughed over it at their dinner-tables, whence it spread among their tenantry and the inhabitants of the adjacent towns:

> "And they who told it added something new,
> And they who heard it made enlargement too,
> In ev'ry ear it spread, on every tongue it grew."

Fancy what a perfect fund of scandal this affair of the Necklace, enveloped as it was at first in such an impenetrable mystery, provided for these despicable minds! What an arsenal for defamation and calumny it furnished to the avowed enemies of Marie-Antoinette! The Orleans faction professed to look upon it as a state crime, pretending to believe that the real culprit was the queen, who had secured the Necklace through the

medium of the cardinal, he having been her dupe in the first instance, and afterwards her victim. They gave out, through their herd of itinerant agents—men without characters, without homes, without bread, without settled occupations, fitted only for scandalous adventures, and living only by dishonourable expedients—that it was Marie-Antoinette herself, "*la louve Autrichienne*," as they styled her, who had met the grand almoner in the park of Versailles at midnight; that it was she who had heard his exculpation, and had listened to his new promises of fealty, which had been sealed by embraces and the gift of a rose; and further, that she had subsequently granted him several secret interviews at Little Trianon. On this false basis they raised their broad superstructure of defamation, and pursued the queen with every species of malignant slander in pasquinades, epigrams, and songs,* "unfit for print or pen, the brutality of which nothing can exceed; but which, nevertheless, found believers—increase of believers, in the public exasperation—and did the queen, say all her historians, incalculable damage,"†

* M. de Lescure, in his "La Vraie Marie-Antoinette," brings forward evidence of the existence of a private printing press in the cellars of the Palais Royal, at which these foul libels were struck off.

† "Carlyle's Critical and Miscellaneous Essays," vol. iv. p. 36, *note*.

until, finally, the hideous fabrications culminated in the epithet of Messalina, hurled at her by the furies of the *halles* on her way to the guillotine.

To this body of antagonists must be added those retailers of gossip and small talk who, in a country like France, where most men are mixed up in intrigues, (and no reputation is too sacred for the inuendo, the smart sally, and the *bon-mot*,) delight and revel in scandals enveloped in any degree of mystery. There was certainly no lack of mystery in the affair of the Necklace, and these quick-witted individuals, thinking only of the entangled web offered them to unravel, displayed their ingenuity in suggesting clue after clue, regardless as to whether this or that clever explanation which they put forward compromised the queen or no, for the old loyal feeling of the nation was by this time utterly dead.

The lower classes of society in France had for some time past been brought to believe, and not without reason, that kings and queens were their natural enemies; that they despised, if they did not hate their poorer subjects, whom they only valued as so much food for powder, or for what they could furnish to the exchequer through the hard extortion of the tax-gatherer. Marie-Antoinette was deservedly blamed for her thoughtless acquisition of the château of St. Cloud,

at an outlay of six million francs, at this particular period when several bad harvests had imposed new hardships on the people; when provisions were frightfully scarce, prices correspondingly high, and tillage employment, save as "statute labour," hardly to be had. The peasants in certain parts had even been reduced to "live on meal, husks, and boiled grass." In the towns, the distress, if not so great, was still considerable, and large numbers of men were out of work. Crowds of idlers, as a matter of course, filled the cafés and cabarets—men with fermenting minds, and only too ready to believe any new calumny against the objects of their disaffection, and to lend their busy tongues to circulate the foulest slanders through the land. Upon the quick fancies of these often thoughtless men, who never pause to examine what they hear, the enemies of Marie-Antoinette, who went about inflaming the discontented, encouraging the angry, and imposing on the thoughtless and the credulous, made a lasting and fatal impression.

Whilst the numerous enemies of the queen were thus at work turning the Necklace scandal to the best account, the Baron de Breteuil, whose hatred of the cardinal knew no bounds, was straining every nerve to convert it into an instrument for the effectual ruin of his rival. The Abbé Georgel assures us that this animosity went so far as to induce the minister to

promise Böhmer—who, according to some accounts, had in the first instance been arrested in conjunction with Saint-James and others on suspicion of being privy to the abuse of the queen's name*—full payment for the Necklace if he would aggravate his evidence against the cardinal. De Breteuil also sent emissaries to the Bastille, to communicate with Madame de la Motte, offering to save her if she would furnish sufficient proof to inculpate his old enemy.

Beugnot, at this period a rising young barrister of four-and-twenty, understood to be an intimate acquaintance of the De la Mottes, and known to have been the person last in company with the countess previous to her arrest, fully expected to be sent to join her in the Bastille. The Baron de Breteuil, however, far from ordering Beugnot's arrest, instructed M. de Crosne, recently appointed lieutenant of police in place of M. Lenoir, promoted to the presidency of the administration of finances, to send privately for the young barrister, when, playing on his vanity, he recommended him to take the countess's brief, as the trial was certain to attract the eyes of all men, and could hardly fail to push forward a young advocate in his career. But Beugnot, who knew his proposed client too well, declined

* "Correspondance Secrète Inédite sur Louis XVI., Marie-Antoinette, la Cour et la Ville," vol. i. p. 587.

to avail himself of the opportunity. "The next day," observes he, "I received a new message from M. de Crosne, which involved another visit on my part. The lieutenant of police gave me an opened letter of Madame de la Motte's, who, not understanding the difficulties which I felt in charging myself with her defence, begged me to come and see her. M. de Crosne backed up her request with some pressing solicitations of his own; then judging from my obstinate refusal, or possibly from something that Madame de la Motte had said to him, that I thought there was danger attached to the post proposed to me, he sought to reassure me on this point, and urged me to see the Baron de Breteuil. I declined. 'I could say nothing to the minister,' I remarked, 'which I had not already said to him, neither would the former obtain from me what I had refused to the lieutenant of police.' M. de Crosne insisted still more strongly, and gave me to understand that more condescension on my part to the views of the authorities would be neither prejudicial to my professional advancement nor to my fortune; his favourite refrain always being—'See the Baron de Breteuil.' I gave M. de Crosne to understand that I should not have that honour, since I did not see to what it could lead, and I left him, after obtaining permission to address to him a letter in reply to the one he had delivered to me.

"When recalling this scene, I can scarcely doubt the nature of the political interest which the Baron de Breteuil took in Madame de la Motte. He knew from one of his confidential emissaries, with whom I had been conversing, that I treated the stealing of the Necklace as comparatively a pitiful incident; but that I regarded the scene in the park almost in the light of a capital crime. This was apparently in precise accordance with his own views, and made him anxious that Madame de la Motte's counsel should share to the fullest extent in his opinions. In replying to the countess's letter, I grounded my refusal on my want of talent and experience for so grave a business, and I added, that it would be useless for her to insist further, as my refusal being dictated to me by my conscience, nothing she could urge would induce me to revoke it."*

On her side, Marie-Antoinette, deeply and very naturally incensed against the Prince de Rohan, and, truth to tell, quite as eager for his destruction as the minister Breteuil, refused likewise to look elsewhere for a culprit. Both she and the king believed the grand almoner to be guilty of the peculation, and of an impertinent abuse of the queen's name. They knew he had contracted enormous debts; they knew, too, that

* "Mémoires du Comte Beugnot," vol. i. pp. 97-8.

he had been charged with tampering with the funds of a rich hospital, the *Quinze-Vingts*, of which he was treasurer, and that he had hitherto led a most dissolute life. Was he not, therefore, precisely the man who would be likely to perpetrate such a crime? Already branded in public opinion for an alleged malversation of a million of francs in the matter of the *Quinze-Vingts*, his office of grand almoner, and his dignity as a prince of the Church, could not raise him above suspicion. The aversion first excited in the queen's mind by the cardinal's private letter against her mother, and his injurious representations respecting herself at the court of Vienna, was increased to positive hatred by the description of the scene in the park of Versailles, by the frequent association of her own name with his in people's mouths, as well as by the offensive commentaries provoked by that association. This burning abhorrence, continually fed by fresh reports similar in character to the foregoing, so blinded Marie-Antoinette to the strict rules and rigid formalities of justice, that in her first moments of passion she is said to have demanded the cardinal's life of the king, and the king, moreover, is believed to have promised her that he should not escape the scaffold.

XXVIII.

1785. Sept.—Oct.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE TRIAL.—CAPTURE OF THE COUNTERFEIT QUEEN.

The Cardinal de Rohan, who in the first instance was looked upon as the grand criminal in the Necklace affair, was no sooner in safe keeping than the question arose what should be done with him. It is true that the queen, in her first moments of anger, urged on by her adviser, the Abbé Vermond, and the cardinal's enemy, the Baron de Breteuil, was for doing swift execution upon the grand almoner; but there were certain tedious forms of law to be gone through before a prince of the holy Roman Church could be sent to the scaffold. Irresolute Louis XVI. had, of course, no opinion of his own, and it is quite certain that much indecision on the subject prevailed among his chief advisers. Phlegmatic M. de Vergennes, though no friend of the queen, seems to have thought it best to hush the matter up, and

let the scandal die out if it would, and well-nigh convinced the king that this would be the proper course to pursue. While the affair was under discussion, Louis XVI. wrote to M. de Vergennes as follows:

"I thank you, sir, for your new interview with M. de Breteuil. I have weighed your reasons; come to-morrow before mass, and I will hear you upon this subject once more. It is necessary that a decision should be arrived at, so as to end with this intrigue of a needy man, who has so scandalously compromised the queen, and who, in order to clear himself, has no other recourse than to allege his connection with an adventuress of the worst kind. He dishonours his ecclesiastical character. Being a cardinal, he is none the less a subject of my crown."*

This interview seems to have resulted in a proposal to the cardinal, offering him the option of throwing himself upon the clemency of the king, or of being arraigned before the parliament, not doubting that he would be only too ready to accept the first of these two alternatives. The cardinal, however, consulted with his friends and advocates; and among the latter he

* Unpublished autograph letter of Louis XVI. in the collection of M. Feuillet de Conches.

had two of the ablest at the Paris bar, namely, M. Target, robust of brain and body, pompous in speech, learned as intense study could render him, versed in the treasures of literature, fiery, impetuous, an athlete redoubtable to all,* and who, as member of the National Assembly, subsequently busied himself a good deal in framing the constitution, and was in after years applied to to undertake the defence of Louis XVI. himself—a duty which he declined on the plea that he was getting old; and M. Tronchet, who, though ten years older than Target, did undertake to defend the king, although he knew that he was engaging himself in a hopeless cause —Tronchet, whose natural phlegm disposed him to listen with attention, and whom a healthy judgment directed aright even in the most difficult matters.† The cardinal's friends were all in favour of the parliament; his advocates were divided in opinion. Nevertheless, by the parliament he decided he would be judged, and made known his election to the king in the following terms:

"Sire,—I respectfully thank your majesty for the alternative you have been pleased to offer me. I have no hesitation in preferring the parliament, as affording

* "Souvenirs de M. Berryer, doyen des avocats de Paris, de 1774 à 1838," vol. ii. p. 51.

† Ibid., vol. ii. p. 49.

me the surest way of unmasking the intrigue of which I am the victim, and of proving my innocence before the world."*

On receiving this reply, and exactly three weeks after the cardinal's arrest, the king issued his royal letters patent, addressed to the Parliament of Paris, formally apprising it of the great fraud that had been committed in the queen's name, and of the arrest of the supposed authors of it, and requiring the parliament to investigate and judge the affair. The cardinal having selected the parliament as the tribunal before which he desired to be arraigned, now protested, in his character of bishop and prince of the holy Roman Church, in a somewhat mild way, against the competency of the judges he had himself chosen, and humbly besought the parliament that he might be tried by an ecclesiastical tribunal, composed of his peers or brethren in the episcopacy, in accordance with the recognized rights and privileges of the Catholic Church. This request being refused, the cardinal had no option but to accept the tribunal named by the king. On the pope hearing of this, he summoned a consistory, which unanimously declared that the Cardinal de Rohan had acted contrary to his dignity as a member of the sacred college in

* "Mémoires pour servir," etc., par l'Abbé Georgel, vol. ii. p. 127.

recognizing the authority of the parliament, and at once directed his ecclesiastical suspension for a period of six months, at the end of which time, in the event of his persisting in his course, he was to be struck off the list of cardinals.* In this dilemma, the Abbé Lemoine was despatched to Rome by the cardinal's friends, and succeeded in proving to the pope that the Prince de Rohan had made the protests which his dignity required, though without avail, and that he only accepted a secular tribunal because he was compelled to subscribe to the will of the king. The interdict was thereupon removed, and the cardinal reinstated in all his functions.

While these formalities were being discussed, and the affair still partook of the character of a political contest between the adherents and friends of the house of Rohan and the enemies of Marie-Antoinette on the one hand, and the court and government and partizans of the crown on the other; while people were eagerly devouring the memoirs circulated on behalf of the accused, and were now blaming, now seeking to exculpate the cardinal, and were either attacking or sympathizing with Madame de la Motte, and ridiculing, Cagliostro, an individual whom no one was particularly

* "Mémoires pour servir," etc., par l'Abbé Georgel, vol. ii. p. 138, *et seq.*

regarding, was silently, but none the less earnestly, labouring to overthrow the cold calculations of political animosity, and dissolve all those dreams of private vengeance of which the Prince de Rohan was the object. This was the Abbé Georgel, the cardinal's vicar-general, who had taken upon himself the task of disentangling the threads of this complicated affair. With the sanction of the grand almoner, he went first of all to the jewellers, and arranged with them that they should receive payment for the Necklace in full, with all interest then due or that might hereafter accrue, and he gave them as security an assignment under the cardinal's hand, of the revenues of the Abbey of St. Waast, to the amount of three hundred thousand francs per annum. Thus this able man of business, by a single wrench, so to speak, drew out the most envenomed shaft, converting the jewellers from enemies, if not into friends, at any rate into very harmless antagonists. The cardinal's other creditors, whose claims amounted to nearly two millions of francs, on hearing of the assignment, became clamorous, and had also to be arranged with.* The abbé now directed his attention to the state prosecution, in order to see whether it could not be diverted from the cardinal, the actual

* "Mémoires pour servir," etc., par l'Abbé Georgel, vol. ii. p. 143.

victim of the fraud, to the countess and her confederates, the perpetrators of it. Night and day, with the pertinacity of the true Jesuit, did the Abbé Georgel pursue his plan; now visiting the Bastille and examining the cardinal, next examining his friends, his visitors, and his domestics, and then again the different individuals to whom these referred him, and taking notes of every scrap of information he obtained. For many weeks his industry seemed to yield him no result, for as yet he was without anything like a positive clue. At length, from hints given him by the Abbé de Juncker, he tracked out Father Loth, one of the countess's minor instruments, and so far privy to her misdeeds as to judge it prudent on his part to keep entirely in the background until the Necklace inquiry was brought to a close.* For a long time he was a most unwilling witness, but eventually the Abbé Georgel skilfully extracted from him all that he knew, and learned for the first time the names of Mademoiselle d'Oliva and of Rétaux de Villette, and the *rôles* they had been engaged to play. The announcement of this discovery demolished in a moment the subtle political intrigue, the object of which had been to send the Cardinal de Rohan to the scaffold.

* "Mémoires pour servir," etc., par l'Abbé Georgel, vol. ii. p. 145.

Encouraged by this stroke of good fortune, the abbé proceeded to track the fugitives, for Mademoiselle d'Oliva, as well as Rétaux de Villette, had turned her back upon Paris soon after the countess's arrest. Through the good offices of the Count de Vergennes, who got the king to consent to a demand for her surrender being made in his name, on the 16th of October the "*jolie demoiselle*" of the Palais Royal was captured at Brussels in the middle of the night by the sub-lieutenant of police, three civic officers, a greffier, and some half-dozen of the town guard—rather a formidable force with which to take an unprotected female of four-and-twenty into custody. It was owing to the exertions of Marie-Antoinette's sister, the Duchess of Saxe-Teschen, who was at that time *gouvernante* of the Austrian Netherlands, that the Demoiselle d'Oliva and her lover, a certain M. de Beausire, formerly attached to the household of the Count d'Artois, were routed out. A letter of the queen's, written to her sister, is extant, in which she says, "Your government, I am certain, will second me in searching for the woman who played the part in the garden scene, and who has taken refuge with you."* D'Oliva was at once brought to

* "Correspondance Inédite de Marie-Antoinette," par Comte P. Vogt d'Hunolstein, p. 133.

Paris, and lodged in the Bastille. She, however, knew nothing beyond what related to the nocturnal scene in the park of Versailles, when she had been tricked out to play the part of queen. Yet what she did know she told with frankness and with an air of perfect truth. A new memorial, ostensibly on her behalf, was at once brought out by the indefatigable abbé, containing the announcement of the important fact, now proved beyond a doubt, that it was the humble actress now in custody, and not the Queen of France, who took part in the famous interview which had given rise to so much scandal. The story was so clear, the incident so fully explained, that the malice of ten thousand tongues was in a moment deprived of its nutriment, and the great figure of Marie-Antoinette was suddenly withdrawn from the scene—too late, alas! for her subsequent reputation,—while the innocence of the cardinal was everywhere beginning to be felt.

Before D'Oliva's memorial made its appearance, however, and indeed, before the counterfeit queen's capture, Madame de la Motte had been engaged in furnishing her counsel with the materials for a memorial on her own behalf, which was made public early in November, when, in all probability, she had not heard of D'Oliva's arrest. This formed number one of that series of lying "Mémoires" issued by the countess, which, in their

endeavour to explain away certain new evidence that had come to light, contradicted former statements made by her, contradicted each other, and at times contradicted themselves. The countess avers that so great was the excitement on the occasion of the issue of her first memorial, that M. Doillot, her advocate, was obliged to have a guard at his house during the distribution of the copies, six thousand of which were sold in the course of a day or two.*

The countess, who had been in the Bastille for several months, feeling by no means dissatisfied with the turn her case was apparently taking, and contenting herself with denying all knowledge of the Necklace, experienced a certain degree of disquiet on learning of the arrest of Mademoiselle d'Oliva; still, her fertile brain was soon at work to concoct some kind of explanation of the circumstances to which this new witness might be expected to depose. Besides, if it came to the worst, could she not fall back upon her system of general denial? and was not D'Oliva a person of notoriously bad character, whose word would weigh as nothing against that of a descendant of the house of Valois? It must have been about this time that she would have also heard from her counsel of the rumours

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. i. p. 426.

afloat respecting the depositions which Carbonnières, intendant of the cardinal's household, had procured in England from the jewellers Gray and Jefferys, and have seen how necessary it was that the more complete story which she would now be constrained to tell should fit in all its parts with this new and unexpected evidence. It was more than ever requisite that she should be wakeful, since she had heard, like the rest of the world, that the prosecution would be a contest between the queen and the Baron de Breteuil on the one hand, and the Prince de Rohan and his powerful partizans on the other; and there are strong reasons for believing that the home secretary and other enemies of the cardinal had insinuated to her, through various channels, that if she could only produce good evidence against the grand almoner, no other victim would be required. If we can believe her own statement, that "mercenary hireling," as she calls him, Commissary Chénon, "made use of every argument to exasperate me against the cardinal," and wound up by saying, "He indeed may lay all manner of things to your charge, but make yourself easy, we shall take care to saddle him with everything."

XXIX.

1786. JAN.

THE TRIAL: EXAMINATION OF THE ACCUSED.

AT length, after the law had exhausted its customary period of delay, the examination of the accused commenced. The Cardinal de Rohan was first questioned, and told his story much the same as the reader has already gathered it from the preceding pages. Mademoiselle d'Oliva was next examined, and simply confirmed all that she had stated in her published memorial, from which we have quoted the chief passages. Pecuniary embarrassment, she said, was the sole reason of her leaving Paris within a few weeks of the time that Madame de la Motte was arrested, for it was then that her creditors began to press her for payment of their claims. She went to Brussels by recommendation of a person who lived in the same house that she did, and whom she knew was a native of that place. It was now the countess's turn, for as yet Rétaux de

Villette had proved more than a match for the Abbé Georgel, and was still skulking in some safe retreat. As for Cagliostro, his examination was to be deferred until after the countess's had been brought to a close.

Madame de la Motte commenced by detailing the chief incidents in her career, from the time she was taken notice of by the Marchioness de Boulainvilliers until the moment of her first introduction to the cardinal, with something like a regard for truth. When questioned respecting her pretended intimacy with the queen, she said she had not the honour of being known to her, and denied ever having represented that she had access to her; said that she had never shown any letters purporting to be from her majesty; that she had never been honoured with letters from her, and consequently could not have shown any such letters.

With regard to Mademoiselle d'Oliva, the countess said that all she knew of her arose from casually meeting her in the Palais Royal, when she learnt from her that her husband, who was a friend of Monsieur de Choiseul, had left her, and gone to America. Compassionating her lonely condition, and finding her to be, to all appearances, a well-conducted young person, she had asked her to her house, "and had taken her on one occasion to Versailles, where she stayed with her for three days." When asked if she had not to-

D'Oliva that she was a lady of the court, on terms of close intimacy with the queen, by whom she was charged to find a person who would render her majesty some service, and for which a reward of fifteen thousand francs would be given, she ridiculed the entire affair, said it was an invention of the cardinal's and Father Loth's, both of whom knew of the unpleasantness that had arisen between her husband and herself with regard to the woman D'Oliva, whom she afterwards found by her behaviour to be anything but the respectable person she represented herself to be, and was, in fact, a common courtesan who had been receiving the visits of Count de la Motte for some time past. She admitted that D'Oliva walked in the park of Versailles with her husband and Villette, on some evening in July of the year 1784, while she was promenading with the Cardinal de Rohan, but she utterly denied the whole story of dressing her up to personate the queen, and then conducting her to the park, and instructing her what she was to say on being addressed by a great personage to whom she was to hand a letter and a rose. The countess protested that she felt highly indignant at the mere suggestion of these "numerous falsehoods," these "horrible reports;" that "the entire thing was most absurd, and nothing but a foolish and incredible fable, most wretchedly concocted by its author, the Prince de

Rohan." She said, of course it was false that she had ever told D'Oliva that the queen was pleased at the way in which she had acquitted herself, or that she had read a letter to her, purporting to be from the queen, saying the same thing; and as for having given D'Oliva one thousand or three thousand francs, or any money whatever, after this affair, she had certainly done nothing of the kind.

When asked if she had obtained from the Cardinal de Rohan two sums of 50,000 francs and 100,000 francs, in the months of August and November, 1784, in the queen's name, she simply ridiculed the suggestion, and pertinently asked, was it likely the cardinal would have been so mad as to have handed over to her such considerable amounts as these without receiving orders known perfectly well to have come from the queen, or, at any rate, taking some kind of acknowledgment from her for them?

On being questioned with respect to the Necklace, the countess denied having had anything whatever to do with its purchase. She said she only saw the jewellers once before it was sold to the cardinal, on which occasion she peremptorily declined meddling in the affair. When asked if she had carried or had shown to the cardinal a letter purporting to be from the queen, wherein the queen expressed a wish to possess the

Necklace, she ingeniously observed, if it were intended to be suggested that she had been the bearer of any such letter as that alluded to, she desired the letter might be produced, for it was the cardinal's duty to have preserved a document of such importance. She admitted having casually spoken to the cardinal about the Necklace the day after the jewellers had shown it to her, but the cardinal appeared to pay no attention to what she said, although he afterwards sent to her for the jewellers' address. She certainly showed his note to Böhmer and Bassenge, but never said or hinted to them that he was acting on behalf of the queen, whose name was never once mentioned. With regard to the actual purchase of the Necklace she knew positively nothing until several days afterwards, when the cardinal told her that he had bought it for the queen.

As to the contract, the countess declared it had not been given to her to show to the queen, and consequently she could not have returned it to the cardinal "approved" and signed. When the contract was first shown to her she immediately recognized the body of it as being in the cardinal's handwriting, but she did not know the writing of the signature : she positively denied having written it herself, or that it had been signed by any person she knew.

In reply to further questions, Madame de la Motte

stated that she did not know when the Necklace was handed over, and could not say whether she saw the cardinal at Versailles on the 1st of February, 1785, although she saw him most days when he was there. She had no hesitation in declaring the story about the cardinal bringing the Necklace to her house, and the casket being handed over to a person who came with a note from the queen, to be absolutely false from beginning to end. The countess indignantly denied ever having had the Necklace in her possession, or having had it taken to pieces; but, knowing well enough that there was evidence forthcoming of her and her husband having sold some of the diamonds forming part of it, she endeavoured to make her admissions fit, as it were, with the evidence she thought likely to be brought forward. She maintained, however, that she was merely acting as agent for the cardinal, who, she said, sent her first of all twenty-two diamonds in a little box, with a note bidding her sell them as soon as she could. Subsequently he sent her a second box, containing a number of small diamonds which she was likewise to dispose of. The first parcel of diamonds Villette, she said, endeavoured to sell, but did not succeed, and they were eventually sold to the jeweller Paris for fifteen thousand francs, by recommendation of Monsieur Filleul, advocate of Bar-sur-Aube, and this

amount she duly remitted to the cardinal, who afterwards sent her sixteen other diamonds, which she sold to the same person for sixteen thousand francs, and forwarded the amount to the cardinal in the early part of May. The small diamonds, she said, she sold to Regnier, together with one of larger size which the cardinal had given her, for the sum of five thousand five hundred and forty francs. The two diamond rings which, it will be remembered, were set by Regnier, were set, she said, for the cardinal, and the same with respect to a *bonbonnière* which Regnier had encircled with diamonds for the count.

During the same month, while the Cardinal de Rohan was at Saverne, she said, one Carbonnières, a member of the cardinal's household, came to her in the Rue Neuve-Saint-Gilles, at six o'clock in the morning, and inquired if it would be possible for her to undertake a journey to Saverne in four days' time, some important business which he had in hand preventing him from going himself. He had something of great value and importance to transmit to the cardinal, who, he knew, would be very much pleased with her if she but did what he asked. At the expiration of the four days, Carbonnières, she said, brought her a large sealed packet, and lent her his walking-cane, and directed the coachman to proceed by the Porte St. Martin as far as

Pantin, the first stage. On reaching Saverne she put up at an inn, and apprised the cardinal of her arrival, who sent over one of his own carriages to fetch her. Immediately she saw the cardinal she gave him the sealed packet, and he asked her to stay and dine with him, but as she was dressed in man's clothes she was obliged to decline. The cardinal, after thanking her for the trouble she had been at on his account, then made her a present of the *bonbonnière* which Regnier had mounted with diamonds for him. "Open it," he said, "and you will find something." She did as directed, and saw it was full of unset diamonds. On leaving the cardinal he intrusted her with a packet of letters for Carbonnières, which, on her arrival at Paris, she duly forwarded, together with the walking-cane which had been lent to her, to the Hôtel de Strasbourg.

At this point of her examination the countess essayed what she thought would prove a grand *coup*, and which, bewildering and astonishing her judges, would make her innocence apparent with due melodramatic effect. She stated that in the month of March of last year she went, accompanied by her niece, a little girl of ten or twelve years of age, daughter of Madame de la Tour, to the Hôtel de Strasbourg to meet that great, that extraordinary man, as the cardinal invariably called him, the Count de Cagliostro, whom she had seen at Strasbourg

four years previously, and who was on the present occasion to exhibit some of his marvellous performances. She and her niece were conducted to the cardinal's sleeping apartment, which was lighted up with twenty or thirty candles, when Count Cagliostro, calling her niece to him, took her upon his knee, and made her promise never to reveal to any one what she was about to see. He then dressed her out with a blue, green, and black ribbon, and also a white ribbon, to which was attached a cross and a star, and put on her a white apron covered over with different orders, and ornamented with beautiful silver lace. He then placed his naked sword upon her head, and pronounced these words: "I command thee, in the name of the Great Cofte and of the angels Michael and Raphael, to show me what I shall presently tell thee;" and, taking her niece by the hand, he led her behind a screen where there was a table and a bottle of very clear water, on which he made her place her hand. The count then passed to the other side of the screen, where she and the cardinal were seated, and commanded them to keep strict silence. He then pronounced certain words, of the meaning of which she understood nothing—but which the cardinal told her were to drive away the evil spirit—and said to her niece: "Say, 'I command thee to make me see all that I desire.' Strike! What dost

thou see? Hold thy hand always upon the bottle. What dost thou see?" "Nothing, monsieur." "Strike again. Strike! strike! What dost thou see? Dost thou not see a woman dressed in white, with a long fair face?" "Yes. monsieur." "Who is it? Dost thou not see the queen? Dost thou know her?" "Yes, monsieur; it is the queen." "Say again, 'In the name of the Great Cofte I command thee to show me all that I shall desire.' Strike! What dost thou see, little one? Seest thou not an angel on thy right, who turns towards thee as though to embrace thee? Seest thou?" "Yes, monsieur." "Ah well! embrace him!"

Some days afterwards Count Cagliostro, who was not satisfied with this *séance*, at which all had not been made visible that he desired, directed that her niece should be dressed entirely in white, with her hair hanging loosely down, when he recommenced the same ceremony. The cardinal, on this occasion, forced her to go behind the screen, and Count Cagliostro made her and her niece go upon their knees, after which he said to the latter: "I ordain thee, &c. What seest thou, little one? Look at the point of my sword. Dost thou not see some one kneeling? Who is it! Name them!" "It is my lord cardinal and my aunt." "What does my lord do?" "He takes a crown of six francs from a snuff-box which you hold in your hand."

"What further does he do?" "He takes a crown of three francs out of the same box." "What more dost thou see at the point of my sword? Dost thou not see a magnificent palace and gardens?" "Yes, monsieur." "Whom dost thou see there?" "No one, monsieur." "Look again; look well." "I see nothing, monsieur." Then Cagliostro, finding that she saw nothing, said to the cardinal: "She is too old; she is not pure. I must have another child." To which the cardinal remarked: "I understand, one of those you know well."

Eight days afterwards, Cagliostro went through a similar performance with two young children by turns, and in the following month there was another *séance* at the cardinal's hotel, when Cagliostro directed a table to be taken to one end of the saloon, and a large number of lighted candles to be placed upon it. He then laid his naked sword, crossing it with a poignard, in the centre, and arranged around it a quantity of medals, and the crosses of Jerusalem and St. Andrew, and commanded the countess to lay her hands upon them, and swear that she would never divulge what she was about to see and hear, and what was going to be proposed to her. Then, turning to the cardinal, Cagliostro said to him: "Prince, go now; go now, prince." They spoke together in a low tone, and the cardinal went to his secretary, which stood by the side of his cabinet,

and brought from it a rather large oval-shaped box of white wood, whereupon Cagliostro said to him: "There is still another; bring it forth." On opening these boxes they were both found to be full of diamonds, and the cardinal then said to her: "Will your husband go to England if I send him? I will give him two thousand crowns, which he can place with some banker here for a draft upon London." Whereupon she asked the cardinal the name of this banker and his address, to which he replied: "It is Bergaud (Perrigaux), Rue du Sentier; he is my ordinary banker. Here, take the diamonds; I will settle the price. Impress upon your husband on no account to sell them without first of all having them set, and tell him he must not bring any unset ones back with him."

The count went to England as the cardinal had suggested, and shortly afterwards the cardinal said to her, "Write to your husband to send me what money he has received, for I have some pressing payments to make. You remember seeing a lady with me during Holy week. I have promised her five hundred thousand francs. She is a German, and is about to marry a gentleman of Versailles so as to legitimatize a child of which I am the father." On being written to, her husband hastened home again, bringing with him drafts upon Bergaud (Perrigaux) for 121,000

francs, a medallion set with brilliants valued at one thousand crowns, a pair of girandole earrings valued at two thousand crowns, a diamond pin, and two large diamond rings, which, together with the drafts for one hundred and twenty-one thousand francs, were handed to the cardinal; who returned the earrings, the pin, and the medallion, saying, "Here, keep these for your trouble." She told the cardinal that her husband had left behind him, in England, a quantity of diamonds to be sold or else set, to which the cardinal replied, that he would prefer their being sold, but would see about this on his return from Saverne.*

One can very well understand that on the conclusion of this marvellous narrative the sitting of the court was adjourned, and that on the following day Madame de la Motte was asked by her judges what witnesses she could bring forward in support of the extraordinary statements she had made. The countess replied there was only the servant who brought her the first box of diamonds from the cardinal, as the note which accompanied it had been taken possession of by the Prince de Rohan with all his other letters to her, when she was confined under lock and key at the Palais-Cardinal.

On being asked to account for the opulence which

* "Premier Interrogatoire de Madame de la Motte."

she was known to have displayed at the very time that she and her husband were, as she said, selling these diamonds on the cardinal's behalf, she recapitulated various presents of money which she affirmed the cardinal had made her; in addition to which, she said, she had received considerable gifts from the royal princes and princesses and from ministers of the crown. She stated that the diamonds which had been handed to her by the cardinal, including those remaining unsold in England, were of the value of three hundred and seventy-seven thousand francs; nevertheless these did not comprise all that belonged to the Necklace sold to the queen, as the cardinal had given numbers away; and among them, some of the most beautiful to the lady, whom he wanted to marry to a gentleman attached to the suite of the Count de Provence, and to the Countess de Cagliostro. After having expressly stated that the diamonds she and her husband sold did not comprise all that belonged to the Necklace sold to the queen, she maintained, in reply to questions asked her, that she neither knew nor suspected that any of the diamonds sold by them formed any portion of the Necklace in question; otherwise she would have had nothing to do with them, but would have felt it her duty to have warned the jewellers. When her husband, on seeing such a large number of

unset stones, asked the cardinal where they came from, the prince replied that they belonged to an old set of jewels which he had no longer any occasion for now that he was getting old. When reminded that it was at this very time Laporte had spoken to her of the jewellers' inquietude at finding the Necklace was not worn by the queen, Madame de la Motte observed, that in this case the jewellers ought to have addressed themselves to the cardinal, particularly as she had warned them to be cautious. She denied that the cardinal had at any time expressed astonishment to her at her majesty not wearing the necklace; the reverse, indeed, was the fact, it was she who had expressed her astonishment to the cardinal.

The countess, as a matter of course, denied having shown to the cardinal a letter purporting to be from the queen respecting the payment of the sum of seven hundred thousand francs to the jewellers; she also denied having given thirty thousand francs to the cardinal to be handed over to them as interest for the delay in the payment of the instalments. When asked what she borrowed from thirty to forty thousand francs from her notary for at this precise date, she was ready with her answer. It was to oblige the Marchioness de Crussol (the same who went to the guillotine with Madame Elisabeth, the king's sister, when these two poor ladies

embraced each other at the foot of the scaffold), who came to her, and told her of the embarrassing position in which the ambassadress of Portugal was placed through having pledged her diamonds, which she was unable to redeem, and which would have been sold if she had not furnished the money to take them out of pawn.

She tried to persuade her judges that the cardinal had called upon her one morning, and complained to her that he had been duped in the affair of the Necklace; that he had shown her a letter which he imagined had come from the queen, containing these words, "Send by the little countess a sum of money—the amount of which she could not recollect—for these unfortunates. I should be annoyed if they get into trouble." He suspected, however, that the letter was not in the queen's handwriting, and that he had been made a dupe of. He paced up and down the room exclaiming, "Has she deceived me, this little countess? has she deceived me? Oh, no! I know Madame de Cagliostro too well; she is not capable of this."

On being asked if she knew a certain Dame de Courville, she replied that she had seen her with the cardinal in holy week of last year, and that she knew her as a neighbour living within a few doors of her own

house. She then proceeded to say that this was the same lady the cardinal desired to marry to a gentleman belonging to the suite of the Count de Provence, and to whom he had promised to give five hundred thousand francs. When asked if she knew an individual named Augeard, or one Bette d'Etienville, or one Marsilly, a counsellor, she replied that she knew none of those persons. This concluded the countess's first examination, which lasted from the 20th to the 26th of January, an entire week, and of which we have given all the chief points to enable the reader to see the scope and power of Madame de la Motte's inventive faculties, and her proficiency in the arts of falsehood and deceit.

It was now Cagliostro's turn to be examined. In answer to questions put to him, he said that he was a professor of medicine, of noble birth, and had travelled largely in Asia and Africa, as well as Europe, most of the chief cities of which he had visited. He was intimately acquainted with the Prince de Rohan, and since his (the count's) arrival in Paris, on the 30th of January in the past year, had been in the habit of seeing him generally three or four times a week. During this period the prince and his friends had occasionally dined with him at his house in the Rue Saint-Claude. The Necklace, respecting which so

much has been said, was purchased before this time. He remembered the cardinal expressing certain doubts to him with regard to the genuineness of the signature affixed to the contract, when he, sharing in them, advised the grand almoner to throw himself at the king's feet, and confess everything that had transpired; but this he resolutely refused to do.

With regard to the scene at the Hôtel de Strasbourg, described by the Countess de la Motte, Cagliostro asserted this was merely an attempted experiment in animal magnetism, in which he was no great believer. The ribbons which the child was dressed out in were some that were lying about the apartment. He denied having placed his drawn sword on the child's head, and having made use of the words ascribed to him; but admitted there was a bottle of clear water on which the child placed her hand. The affair was got up entirely at the instigation of Madame de la Motte, who displayed great anxiety respecting the forthcoming accouchement of some great lady, and he performed the experiment in the hope of calming her. The countess's story about the table with a large number of lighted candles upon it, and the naked sword and poignard, and the crosses of Jerusalem and St. Andrew, had not a particle of truth in it. He never placed Madame de la Motte's

hand upon these things, and nothing of what she had described took place. The cardinal did not fetch any diamonds from his secretary, and, indeed, the whole affair was a pure piece of invention. The cardinal had given him and his wife a few articles of jewellery as presents; all these things, and whatever other diamonds he possessed, had been seized by the police, and were still in their custody, and could be produced. The cardinal had never given the Countess de Cagliostro any diamonds forming part of the Necklace, nor any sum of money arising from the sale of the diamonds. He had never told the cardinal that his wife was intimate with the queen. She had never seen the queen, and was never once at Versailles, and could have had no correspondence with any one for the best of all reasons—she could not write.*

Cagliostro, in his examination, having stripped the countess's highly inventive narrative of its marvellous character, and exposed her falsehoods with respect to the diamonds, and having, moreover, previously stated in his memorial that he had cautioned the Cardinal de Rohan to be on his guard against Madame de la Motte, whom he stigmatized as a wretch, but that the cardinal would not believe him, the

* "Interrogatoire du Sieur de Cagliostro."

countess's indignation knew no bounds. Knowing the doubtful kind of reputation that attached to Cagliostro, and the peculiar nature of the relations commonly believed to subsist between him and the cardinal, who, it was thought, aided and abetted him in his endeavours to discover the philosopher's stone—it was commonly reported that Cagliostro had prevailed on the cardinal to obtain possession of the Necklace, that he might experiment upon the diamonds and centriple their value*—the countess believed she could readily have diverted not merely suspicion towards the "low empiric," as she was now in the habit of styling him, but have induced a firm conviction of his guilt. This had been her aim from the outset, as is evident from the insinuations in which she indulged with regard to Cagliostro in her memorial, whom she, or rather her counsel, introduces in the following grandiloquent style:

"His name, his surname, his quality? he and the woman attached to his fortunes?—The Count and so-called Countess de Cagliostro!

"His age?—One of his valets said that he knew not the age of his master, but for himself he had been one hundred and fifty years in his service. As for the

* "Correspondance Secrète Inédite sur Louis XVI., Marie-Antoinette, la Cour et la Ville," vol. i. p. 592.

master, he sometimes gave three hundred years as his age, at other times said he had assisted at Galilee at the marriage of Cana.*

"His country?—A Portuguese Jew, or Greek, or Egyptian from Alexandria, who had brought with him to Europe the sorceries and allegories of the East.

"His habits and his religion?—Doctor of the cabalistic art; one of those extravagant members of the Rosy Cross who profess to raise the dead, and make them hold converse with the living, masters of all the sciences, skilled in the transmutation of baser metals into gold, beneficent spirits who attend the poor for nothing, and sell immortality to the rich.

"His fortune? in short, his means of supporting that luxurious ostentation which he has displayed before our eyes?—A sumptuous hôtel, elegant furniture, a well-supplied table, servants in all sorts of liveries; and the court of this hôtel always noisy with carriages, announcing in the midst of an intelligent

* As an example of Cagliostro's audacity in this respect, it may be mentioned that, when first questioned by the lieutenant of police, who, in allusion to the Necklace affair, inquired if he had nothing to reproach himself with—he coolly replied, Nothing but the death of Pompey, and that even with regard to this he acted under the orders of Ptolemy. The lieutenant of police, not taken in the least aback, quietly observed they would refrain from going into any matters that occurred under his predecessors in office. See "Correspondance Secrète Inédite," &c., vol. ii. p. 18.

nation visionaries of every rank—in a word, Cagliostro, without inheriting anything, without purchasing anything, without selling anything, without acquiring anything, is possessed of all. Such is this man.

"What are his great deeds?—Many are known in the different courts of Europe, others are known to Madame Böhmer; but let us confine ourselves to the third filtration of the Necklace, when it is needful to dispose the Count de la Motte to carry to a foreign country a considerable quantity of diamonds. This is the grand result furnished by the crucible of the operator." *

Cagliostro, it may be observed, was greatly excited on hearing of the arrest of his wife, and on afterwards learning that she was ill, became perfectly frantic. He pretended to believe that she was dead or at her last extremity, and threatened to kill himself if he were not permitted to see her, or she were not set at liberty.†

* "Premier Mémoire pour la Comtesse de la Motte," p. 27, *et seq.*

† Autograph Report of the Marquis de Launay, governor of the Bastille, in the collection of M. Feuillet de Conches.

XXX.

1786. Feb.—March.

THE TRIAL: THE CONFRONTATIONS OF THE ACCUSED WITH EACH OTHER AND WITH THE WITNESSES.

The examinations having at length terminated, the confrontations of the accused with each other, and with the principal witnesses, now commenced. At the time these were going on, the accused, in accordance with custom, were deprived of the assistance of their counsel, who were not permitted to hold any intercourse whatever with them. Madame de la Motte and the cardinal were first confronted with each other. The countess describes being ushered into the hall of the Bastille, and the cardinal making his appearance shortly afterwards. The oaths having been administered, the opponents surveyed each other attentively; though, says madame, the cardinal, "pretending to amuse himself with his pencil, which he twirled about in his fingers, affected not to regard me," and the duello of words at

once began. And it was a mere duello of words, for the real points of the affair seem hardly to have been touched upon. At the outset the countess evidently thought she was getting much the best of the contest, for she observes in her "Life," that in her replies to the cardinal's interrogatories her expressions "were so strongly pointed, so pertinent and forcible, that every one present gave smiles of approbation."* When questioned as to whence she derived the means for such an unwonted display of opulence as she was known to have exhibited, she pointed to the cardinal, and gave the judges distinctly to understand that the relations subsisting between them were those of lover and mistress, and not benefactor and supplicant as had been commonly supposed; hence the motive for the liberal gifts which she had received at the hands of the Prince de Rohan.†

As the contest went on, the cardinal, according to madame's version, got some further awkward thrusts which touched him to the quick, and made him "look uneasy, and turn suddenly pale, and complain of a violent headache," which stayed the proceedings for a time. When these were resumed, the countess thinks it necessary to object to what she styles some impropriety on the part of the cardinal—he put some pertinent

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. pp. 19, 20.

† Confrontations du Cardinal de Rohan avec Madame de la Motte.

question which it was not convenient for her to answer—whereupon a three hours' altercation ensues, during which the plethoric cardinal gets "red as fire," while madame, less excited, "comes off," she tells us, "with flying colours," the judges smiling her "smiles of encouragement" meanwhile. Thus ended the first day's confrontation.

The day following, the cardinal entered the hall quite chapfallen; "instead of his former fierce and haughty demeanour, his eyes appeared to ask pardon, and his countenance was sweet and engaging."* His "mildness" gave the countess "fresh spirits, and increased her hopes," but a scene of wrangling began immediately—each accused the other of having had the Necklace, and of knowing what had become of it. "At this moment," remarks the countess, "I was not mistress of my temper, and loaded them all with reproaches," which brought down upon her a severe reproof from the judges, which did not, she confesses, "in the least tend to abate her violence."† The second day's proceedings terminated, therefore, in a greater tempest than the first had done.

If we believe what Madame de la Motte says, the cardinal, as the confrontations progressed, grew quite sentimental. Weak and foolish to the extreme point of

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. p. 30.

† Ibid., vol. ii. p. 41.

folly we know the grand almoner to have been, still, now that the film was removed from his eyes, we can hardly credit that he acted the old dotard's part as the countess would have us believe. "He blew me over kisses," she says, "and when he discovered my eyes turned aside upon any other object, he played with his pencil to attract my notice." At another time, "he clasped his hands eagerly together, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, 'Ah!' exclaimed he, 'how unhappy we are!' He even shed tears." *

On a subsequent occasion the countess pretends that when they were by themselves at one end of the hall the cardinal approached her, took her by the hand, and led her to the fireplace, and that while they were there standing in an attitude of the most friendly regard, engaged in earnest conversation, she suddenly rang the bell, which brought in De Launay, governor of the Bastille, and two of his officers, who surprised them in the attitude above described. "The lieutenant, De Losme," she observes, "could scarce pardon me to see me holding discourse with my executioner, 'a person,' said he, with indignation, 'that endeavours to prove you a thief;'" and who did, indeed, in due course, not only prove her a thief, but procured her a felon's punishment.

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. p. 40.

Although, according to her own account, these confrontations opened so triumphantly for her, the countess at their close had lost much of that confidence which her overweening vanity had led her to feel, and tried hard to prolong the proceedings by urging that application be made to the king for permission for her to send a letter to her husband, "to engage him to come in person to confront and disprove this preconcerted system of lying accusations which pretends that he has gone off with a part of the Necklace;" just as if the count could not have come forward, and done all this of his own accord, and might possibly have been tempted to do so had he not had a wholesome fear of the scourge and the branding-iron, and of being chained to the oar as a galley slave for the rest of his life.

Judging from the countess's report of these confrontations, they would seem to have been merely a series of wordy wranglings; it is, however, quite certain that in the course of them many facts damaging to her in the last degree were brought to light. Her wretched poverty, up to the very moment that she touched the first fifty thousand francs of the cardinal's money, was proved beyond a doubt, as well as the comparative affluence which she displayed immediately afterwards. And the same with respect to the almost Oriental style

of luxury in which the De la Mottes commenced to live immediately after the count had returned from England with the proceeds arising from the sale of the diamonds to the jeweller Gray.

The countess in her confrontation with Laporte, who had first mentioned the Necklace to her, and had introduced her to the crown jewellers, tried to wheedle him by such a shallow manœuvre as thus addressing him: "I believe you to be a honest man, Monsieur Laporte. Forget for a moment that you have made any deposition, and distinctly answer my questions." Laporte, however, stuck to his text, and nothing favourable to the countess could be extracted from him.* When she and the Baron de Planta, the cardinal's equerry, are brought face to face, he declines to swear black to be white, and persists in saying that he had himself carried to her the two several sums of fifty thousand francs and one hundred thousand francs, which she had applied to the cardinal for in the queen's name. "I swear in the presence of justice, and on my honour and my head," exclaimed the indignant baron, "that I myself gave you these amounts from the Cardinal de Rohan to be remitted to the queen;" † whereupon madame pronounces him to

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. p. 55.
† "Mémoires pour servir," etc., par l'Abbé Georgel, vol. ii. p. 185.

be mad, and in proof of her assertion recounts, with evident unction, the particulars of an attempted indelicate assault upon her by the baron in the month of October, 1784.* Regnier, the goldsmith and jeweller who supplied the De la Mottes with a service of plate, &c., and received diamonds in discharge of his account, having given his version of his transactions with the count and countess, the latter, following her usual system of denial, contradicts Regnier point blank, whereupon he exhibits the entries in his books made at the time. She then admits everything, and asks herself, with seeming astonishment, how it was possible in less than a year for her to have so far lost her memory.†

The countess, when confronted with Father Loth, loaded him with a shower of reproaches. "You bad man," exclaimed she, "it is you who have led my husband astray; you have introduced him to disreputable women. You have persuaded him to live on bad terms with me. You have robbed me."‡ Grenier, the goldsmith and money-lender, had deposed that Madame de la Motte had ordered of him two superb robes of Lyons silk, saying she intended making a present of them to

* Confrontations de la Dame de la Motte avec les témoins.

† "Mémoire pour le Cardinal de Rohan," p. 47.

‡ Confrontations de la Dame de la Motte avec les témoins.

the queen; in reply to which he had told her point blank that it was not likely she would dare to take the liberty of making presents to her majesty. Whereupon the countess remarked that there was no such ceremony as he supposed between relations! She had moreover told him that she had reinstated the cardinal in the queen's good graces, and that her majesty dared refuse her nothing.* When brought face to face with Grenier, she exclaimed, "He has been in the Bastille for fifteen days, and when he comes out his first act is to depose against me out of revenge, because I once had him put outside my house, and because it was in relation to me that he was imprisoned."†

With regard to her confrontations with the Demoiselle d'Oliva, the countess complains that questions were put to the latter in such a form that she had only to answer yes or no. "I did not let this escape me," she remarks, "but desired Dupuis de Marcé, one of the reporters of the case, appointed by the parliament, to suffer her to speak, and not to be her mouthpiece. He turned red, was stung with rage, and getting up like a demoniac, put an end to the sitting."‡ When it was resumed, and

* "Compte rendu de ce qui s'est passé au Parlement," etc., pp. 75-6.

† Confrontations de la Dame de la Motte et du Cardinal.

‡ "Mémoires Justificatifs de la Comtesse de la Motte," p. 235.

that portion of D'Oliva's declaration was read which spoke of the letters which the countess had shown her, purporting to have been written by the queen, Madame de la Motte cannot conceal her agitation. She makes signs to D'Oliva, winks her eyes at her, and finding that she takes no notice, keeps repeating the action. When charged with this, she replies in a furious tone of voice, "I make signs to you? Yes, I make you a sign that you are a monster for having said such a thing." She then proceeds to charge D'Oliva with having behaved immodestly when on a visit to her at Charonne, says she was guilty of positive indecencies, that she was only a common courtezan, who had been for some time her husband's mistress, and who had usurped a title to which she had no claim. She next enlarged upon D'Oliva's affairs generally, and spoke of her pecuniary embarrassments, and of the real and supposed disappointments she had experienced, with "audacity, arrogance, and fury;" for all of which she was duly taken to task by D'Oliva's counsel in a new edition of his client's "Mémoire." "Proud and vile woman," the memorial proceeds to say, "who caressed me when I could serve you, who disdained me when I exposed you, who hate me when I confound you, descend, descend from the supreme height of your genealogical tree, from whence you brave the law, impose upon its

administrators, and insult by turns your unfortunate co-accused."*

As for Cagliostro, on whom and on whose wife the countess had tried her utmost to shift a portion of her own guilt, out of revenge, we suppose, for the count having been the first to suggest to the cardinal that she had tricked him in the Necklace business, he is "this oracle who bewitched the cardinal's understanding," a low alchemist, a false prophet and profaner of the true religion, a mountebank and a vagabond. To which Cagliostro pertinently replied, "Not always a false prophet, for had the Prince de Rohan taken my advice he would have seen through the artifices of the countess, and neither of us been where we are. To her numerous calumnies I will content myself with making a laconic reply, the same that was made by Pascal under parallel circumstances—a reply which politeness forbids me to make in the vulgar tongue, but which madame's counsel will translate for her, *Mentiris impudentissime.*"† The countess, not knowing the meaning of the phrase, imagined, correctly enough, that it was something exceedingly offensive, and to use her own language, "put an end to the scene by throwing a candlestick at the quack's head! Cagliostro, enraged

* "Mémoire pour la Demoiselle Leguay d'Oliva," p. 34.

† "Mémoire pour le Comte de Cagliostro," p. 46.

and foaming at the mouth, said to me, "He will come, thy Villette! he will come! it is he that will speak!'"*

Referring to her confrontation with Madame Dubarry, the countess observes, "I cannot withstand the temptation of saying a few words concerning the part assigned to the 'queen dowager,' the immaculate Dubarry of monastic memory. She stated that I had been at her house to solicit her protection, and that I had left with her a memorial, signed 'Marie-Antoinette de France.' The fact is, I only went to her house out of curiosity in a good coach and four. Upon her signifying to me that she thought the branch of Valois had been extinct, I gave her a memorial of my genealogy, signed '*Marie-Antoine* d'Hozier de Sérigny, Judge of the Nobility of *France*.' When confronted with me she assumed an air of haughtiness and insolence, but I hastened to make her sensible of the distance between her birth and mine."† This wrangling between such a pair of demireps must have been highly amusing to all who chanced to be witnesses of it.

The cardinal, alluding to the confrontations in one of his memorials, says that Madame de la Motte generally either cried or went into convulsions at them, and that with her, audacity, gaiety, and tears succeeded each

* "Mémoires Justificatifs de la Comtesse de la Motte," p. 238.
† Ibid., p. 241.

other by turns, according as she found herself capable of sustaining a part, or felt herself forced to succumb to feelings of remorse and fear.

During Lent of 1786, while the public excitement with reference to the Necklace trial was at its height, the Abbé Georgel, grand-vicar to the cardinal, whose office of grand almoner gave him spiritual jurisdiction over the royal chapel at Versailles, and over the *Quinze-Vingts* and the Assumption, caused to be printed and posted on the doors of the churches and sacristies dependent on the grand almonry, a charge, wherein he quoted the words of St. Paul to his disciple Timothy, exhorting him to blush neither for his captivity nor for his bonds; copies of which charge were even posted in the royal chapel.

The zeal of the Abbé Georgel here carried him a little too far. The king and queen were deeply irritated, and the Baron de Breteuil sent for the offender and spoke sharply to him on the subject. Instead of expressing regret, the faithful grand-vicar, intoxicated with the success he had already met with in thwarting the enemies of the cardinal, his master, ventured to brave the minister of justice, replying to his remonstrances with firmness, and insisting on his right to exercise the powers which the cardinal had delegated

* "Mémoire pour le Cardinal de Rohan," p. 50.

to him. The minister, taken aback at so much assurance on the part of a mere abbé, required Georgel to furnish him with an explanation in writing. This the grand-vicar did in the following terms:

"I had the honour to observe to you, sir, that monseigneur the cardinal not being under the bonds of a legal decree, enjoyed, even where he was, his rights as citizen, bishop, and grand almoner in all their fullness; that a detention which had not been pronounced by law did not take away from a prisoner the right to exercise his civil and ecclesiastical functions; that such an interdiction could be the consequence only of a decree of banishment or imprisonment; that the grand-vicars of monseigneur the Cardinal de Rohan, furnished with his powers, were legally authorized to exercise in his name and under his orders their respective functions; and that our legal code was precise on the application of these principles.

"You then tell me, sir, to send you all these details in writing. I obey the minister of the king, and shall await with the profoundest respect the orders of his majesty respecting the conduct which I ought to show in my quality of grand-vicar."*

This was another false step on the abbé's part, for the

* Autograph Letter of the Abbé Georgel, in the collection of M. Feuillet de Conches.

minister retaliated by a *lettre-de-cachet*, and the only order the grand-vicar received from his majesty was a command, dated March 10, 1786, to depart from Paris within four-and-twenty hours for Mortagne in Brittany. Thus at a most critical point in the proceedings instituted against him was the cardinal suddenly deprived of the services of his able and energetic grand-vicar.

It was at this period, owing to the exertions of Counsellor D'Epréménil, who pressed her case on the attention of the parliament, that the Countess de Cagliostro succeeded in regaining her liberty after upwards of six months' confinement in the Bastille; and about this time the women of Paris, who were great partisans of the cardinal's during the whole time of his imprisonment, took to wearing in their toilettes a combination of scarlet and straw-colour ribbons, which was jocularly entitled "cardinal on the straw"—meaning the cardinal in prison. Grand dames of fashion, too, at the Easter promenade of Longchamp, came out in straw bonnets with scarlet crowns, and trimmed with scarlet ribbon, which Mademoiselle Bertin, the queen's milliner—at this moment out of favour at court—had introduced under the name of *chapeaux au Cardinal.**

* "Correspondance Secrète Inédite sur Louis XVI., Marie-Antoinette," etc., vol. ii. p. 31.

XXXI.

1786. April—May.

ARREST OF THE FORGER VILLETTE.—HIS EXAMINATIONS AND CONFRONTATIONS.

It is now that Rétaux de Villette is unearthed with Abbé Georgel's sleuth-hounds in full cry. Tracked from town to town, and from village to village, he is at length run down at Geneva, having, says one account, since the news of the Necklace affair, crossed the Swiss frontier, assumed various disguises, and turning his musical talents to account, acted the part of a vagrant musician, playing on his mandoline along the streets and highways to amuse the passers by. One version of his capture represents him as having been trepanned in some low Geneva tavern, whilst overcome by drink, into enlisting in some phantom regiment, by which adroit manœuvre he was enticed from off the "sacred republican soil," and carried away to Paris in triumph.* Another version affirms

* "Carlyle's Critical and Miscellaneous Essays," vol. iv. p. 57.

that he had got mixed up in some local brawl at the time the abbé's emissaries pounced upon him, which is likely to be the truer statement of the two, as it is corroborated by his own account of his arrest. "A disturbance," he says, "probably brought about by design, arose in the public streets between two Geneva watchmakers. A Frenchman, witness of the affair, interposed as peace-maker; whereupon he was seized, together with the two disputants. 'Where do you come from?' was asked of him. 'From Lyons.' 'Ah! there has been a great robbery recently committed there. What brought you to Geneva?' 'Nothing.' 'What is your name?' 'Rétaux de Villette.' 'To prison with him!' A few days afterwards an inspector of police arrived from Paris, and carried off the prisoner to the Bastille."*

This must have been about the commencement of April, and no sooner did Villette find himself within the grip of the French police for the second time than he became quite chapfallen. On the road to Paris he was low-spirited to a degree, was constantly speaking of himself as a lost man, as a victim about to be sacrificed. His distress, he tells us, was "aggravated by the jokes of the officers, in which they appeared to take a malicious

* "Requête pour le Sieur Marc-Antoine Rétaux de Villette," p. 5. See also "Correspondance Secrète Inédite sur Louis XVI., Marie-Antoinette," etc., vol. ii. p. 26.

pleasure.* Now and then when cheered with wine he would chat confidentially with police-inspector Quidor concerning his *liaisons* with Madame de la Motte, and would let fall scraps of information respecting the "*belle demoiselle*" of the Palais Royal, the part she played at the midnight meeting at Versailles, and the influence which the countess exercised over the Prince de Rohan; but with regard to everything that related to the Necklace, and the *billets-doux*—"gilt edged," or bordered with "vignettes bleues,"—and the forged signature to the contract with the jewellers, he preserved a discreet silence.

When housed within the gloomy walls of the Bastille he became slightly, but only slightly, more communicative. He railed at his former mistress for having been the cause of his ruin; described how that he came to Paris to obtain a situation in the marshalsea, when, unfortunately for him, he fell into the snares of the siren, who, by pretending to have influence in high quarters, won his confidence, and by promising to do something better for him than his modest expectations led him to hope for, induced him to relinquish all idea of the post he was on the point of securing. Being frequently at her house, the countess employed him in

* "Mémoire Historique des Intrigues de la Cour," etc., par Rétaux de Villette, p. 60.

drawing up and copying memorials setting forth the claims of the house of Valois, and asking sometimes for restitution, and at others for pecuniary assistance; also memorials on behalf of individuals in whom Madame de la Motte took an interest, addressed either to the ministers, or to persons in high official positions, from whom places were solicited for the applicants.

At his first examination Villette confessed absolutely nothing but what he was well aware was already known beyond the possibility of doubt. For instance, he admitted that he was acquainted with Mademoiselle d'Oliva, and that he accompanied the count and her to Versailles on a particular day, in the evening of which she was dressed out, and went with the countess to the park, where he and the count also proceeded. In substance he admitted the acting of the part of the queen by D'Oliva, who left the park with him and the count —the countess going off with the Cardinal de Rohan and the Baron de Planta. Villette scrupulously avoided everything like an admission of having written any letters for the countess. He denied having written a letter for D'Oliva to give to the cardinal, or one for the countess to read to D'Oliva as though it were from the queen. He believed D'Oliva was paid for the part she acted, but did not know the amount; he himself carried her three hundred francs on one occasion. When

questioned respecting the Necklace, he replied that he knew absolutely nothing about it, nor of the negotiation for its purchase, nor of the letters said to have passed between the cardinal and the queen relative to this purchase. He confessed he was very frequently at Versailles, but could not tell whether he was there on the particular day the Necklace is said to have been delivered. At any rate he knew nothing of the circumstances connected with its delivery, was not the bearer of any letter respecting it, and certainly did not write any such letter. Was not aware of the Necklace being taken to pieces, though he admitted having had some diamonds given to him to sell. Did not know the object of the count's journey to London; was not aware that he sold any diamonds there, or that he returned to Paris with letters of credit for a considerable amount. He admitted having assumed the name of Augeard, but only as a disguise for carrying on intrigues with women.

Villette of course utterly denied all knowledge of the signature to the contract, but when asked if he thought the cardinal was able to discern whether the signature was genuine, he replied, that for his own part, without possessing the intelligence of the cardinal, had he been in his place he would not have been duped. During the time he was in familiar intercourse

with the De la Mottes they appeared, he said, to live like persons of means, but he knew nothing of their sources of income. With respect to their opulence, although he had witnessed it, he had never shared it, save as a hanger-on—a guest who always had a seat at their table. With regard to the De la Mottes' motive for leaving Paris in August last, he understood from madame that her circumstances were embarrassed. He admitted having received four thousand francs from madame, but only as a loan to enable him to visit Italy, where he had long desired to go; and confessed to having slept part of the night in a cabriolet in the courtyard of the De la Motte hotel ere setting forth on his journey early on the following day. Finally he stated that he had had no correspondence with the De la Mottes subsequent to his departure.*

Less than a month's reflection in the Bastille seems to have sharpened Rétaux de Villette's memory on several essential points, for he writes a letter to the Count de Vergennes, in which he confesses everything except the receipt of the casket containing the Necklace; this he persisted in denying to the last. In consequence of this letter he is again brought up for examination, when, the contract being produced and shown to him, he admits the words "*approuvé*" and the

* Premier Interrogatoire de Rétaux de Villette.

signature to have been written by himself alone, not in imitation, however, of the queen's handwriting, but in his own ordinary hand. It was done, he said, at the request of Madame de la Motte, and on her assurance that it was to oblige the cardinal. He also confessed to having written, at the countess's dictation, all the *billets-doux*—gilt-edged, and bordered with *vignettes-bleues*—which purported to have been addressed by the queen to the Prince de Rohan, and two letters in particular, in which the queen charged Madame de la Motte to ask the cardinal, in her name, first of all for sixty (fifty) thousand livres, and secondly for one hundred thousand livres, for an immediate payment the queen had to make.* Villette positively denied having been the bearer of a billet purporting to have been written by the queen on the evening of the 2nd of February, and of receiving the casket containing the Necklace, and he complacently referred to the striking difference that existed between the individual indicated by the Cardinal de Rohan and himself. The former, he remarked, had big black eyebrows, a pale thin face, and slender figure; whereas his eyebrows were light, his face full and somewhat rubicund, and his figure inclined to be portly. With regard to the Necklace,

* "Compte rendu de ce qui s'est passé au Parlement," etc., p. 103.

he knew it had been broken up, and that the diamonds intrusted to him to sell formed part of it, but he denied having had any of the diamonds given to him, or of having received money from Madame de la Motte for appending the forged signature to the contract. "It is true she has lent me money," observed he, "and I have kept a note of it, but whenever I have spoken to madame on the subject she has always been polite enough to say that she did not wish the matter mentioned." Finally, he expressed his firm belief that Cagliostro was entirely innocent of any complicity in the affair.*

The countess now undergoes a second examination, at which she denies that Villette wrote any letters to the cardinal in the name of the queen. Having had time to reflect upon the weight of evidence against her, she now admits the truth of the statement with respect to the meeting between the cardinal and D'Oliva in the park of Versailles, but pretends the affair was a mere pleasantry got up to quiet the restless cardinal. She still denied that she had applied to him for the several sums of fifty thousand and one hundred thousand francs, and maintained that she had never received these amounts. Denied, moreover, having ever seen the contract with the jewellers, and having got Villette

* Deuxième Interrogatoire de Rétaux de Villette.

to sign the same. When told that Villette had confessed, she simply replied that she could not conceive his motive for stating the signature to be his; said she first knew of the signature being forged when the cardinal showed her part of a note written by the queen. Next day, after having had time for reflection, we find her adhering to her text, and contenting herself with remarking that Villette had been overpersuaded to say that he signed the document, and by her orders.

At Rétaux de Villette's first confrontation with the countess, after making the damaging admissions which he had done, he seems to have given way to feelings of remorse at having betrayed, as he says, "a woman whom I loved to adoration, and who had loaded me with benefits." He declared that De Launay, Dupuis de Marcé, Fremyn, M. de Vergennes, and others, had forced him to assert, with the view of saving himself, that the countess alone had instigated him to write the false signature of the queen so as to cheat the cardinal, whereupon the sitting was immediately broken up without giving him time to finish what he was about to say.*

When confronted, however, with Madame de la Motte on a subsequent occasion, he tries his hardest, though

* "Mémoire Historique," etc., par Rétaux de Villette, pp. 65-72.

in vain, to induce her to speak the truth. He told her that her denials could be no longer accepted as proofs while he, the principal agent, and other witnesses were giving her the lie. "You will not see," he continued, "that everybody accuses you, and that your voice necessarily loses its power. It is useless to deny that the cardinal, you, and I are culpable in this affair. You seek to destroy the avowal which I make of my own guilt. You say that I lie when I accuse myself of forgery. You lose yourself in acting thus, and evidently do not understand your own interests." *

Madame, however, conceived that she did, and was prepared with her rejoinder, which she made with all the tact and vehemence of the professional advocate. "The observations," remarked she, "that M. Villette has made are only made to frighten me. I fear nothing, and am perfectly calm. To all his remarks I persist in replying that I neither urged him to write the signature nor the '*approuvés*,' nor any other similar writing purporting to come from the queen. If M. Villette is good enough to say that he has written the signature and the '*approuvés*,' it is owing to the fear with which he has been inspired on being told that his ordinary handwriting bore so striking a

* Confrontations de Madame de la Motte avec Rétaux de Villette.

resemblance to the signature appended to the document, and that he would be certain to be condemned, by reason of this resemblance alone, to corporal punishment. He has been told that if he confessed to this, his punishment would be materially lightened. This is what has caused him to make the confession, which I maintain is false. . . . . I repeat that I am in nowise guilty. I await with calmness the punishment that may be awarded me, and I ask no grace.

"With regard to M. le Cardinal, whom M. Villette has just said he believed to be as guilty as we two, I shall not charge myself with his defence, nor with that of any other person, not knowing whether he is guilty or no. If I were in possession of any secret that would tell against the cardinal in the Necklace affair I should not hide it, because for a long time past he has caused me much suffering. As for myself, I again say that I have no confession to make, as M. Villette pretends I have, for I am not guilty, and I am persuaded that he is no more guilty than myself. If I were guilty I would make a confession, in the hope that my punishment would be less grave. As it is, I could only make a false confession; and although M. Villette tells me that every proof has been acquired against me, and that I have only my bare assertions to oppose to these, I repeat again that I leave my judges at liberty to find

me guilty, still asserting that I am innocent and free from crime.'

With this smart peroration of madame's the confrontations were brought to a close, and the accused were remanded back to their several quarters in the gloomy old fortress to await the next step which the law would in due course take. The revelations of D'Oliva, and more particularly those of Villette, by utterly changing the aspect of things, had sadly weakened the countess's confidence in her line of defence, and the hold which she believed she had on the sympathy of the public. To retain so much of the latter as was possible, she published a third memorial, or summary, as it was called—her second was simply a rejoinder to Cagliostro—made up, as was her custom, of an artful combination of ingenious fallacies well calculated to perplex, if not to delude, the understanding.

M. Feuillet de Conches has, among his collection of autographs, an extensive MS. in the countess's handwriting, consisting of her observations upon the various "Mémoires" issued on behalf of her co-accused, and of reports of what passed at her own examinations and confrontations, evidently prepared for the use of

* "Sommaire pour la Comtesse de la Motte," pp. 17, 18.

her advocate, M. Doillot, who drew up her memorials from materials supplied by her, and whom it is quite certain, from the evidence furnished by this MS., she did not scruple to attempt to deceive, just as she tried to deceive her judges, and, indeed, every one else with whom she came in contact.* In neither of the countess's memorials does she seek in any way to implicate Marie-Antoinette, nor lay the least claim to that intimacy with royalty which she subsequently maintained in her "Mémoires Justificatifs" with such wanton audacity, and again in her "Life, written by herself," but lays everything to the charge of the cardinal, fascinated, deluded, and overruled by Cagliostro. As a type of the depravity of the human heart when no moral laws restrain its licence, a book more astounding and impudent than "The Life of Jeanne de St. Remi de Valois, Countess de la Motte,"—from which, in the course of our narrative, we have extracted everything of the least importance wearing an air of truth—was, perhaps, never written.

New memorials, however, were of no use now. Her game, which had been well played so far as it went, was now played out. People of every class turned against

* See note, p. 164, vol. i. "Lettres et Documents Inédits de Louis XVI. et Marie-Antoinette," par M. Feuillet de Conches.

her. The queen and the cardinal were no longer victims to that prejudiced and hastily-formed opinion which, without waiting for the pleadings of the lawyers or the verdict of a jury, passes sentence beforehand. Alone and apart from even her fellow-prisoners, this powerful impostor stood detected as the liar, the swindler, the thief, the contriver of the plot, the single and crafty director of a complicated fraud. And the man who was the first to betray her, and "whose villany and diabolical machinations," to quote the countess's own words, had caused all this to come to light, had been one of her familiars—friends she could hardly be said to have had—a constant hanger-on at her house, an almost daily guest at her table, "who, by way of rendering himself necessary," says the countess, "pretended that, as my husband and I were young people, it was requisite we should have some trusty person to superintend our domestics. He superintended, and had the disposal of everything in the house, and when I went into the country he had all the keys, and the care of paying my servants."* Recalling all this to mind in her "Life," the countess heaps on Father Loth some of her choicest expletives—"serpent" and "viper" being the most

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. p. 330.

favourite. He is, for instance, "the serpent that stung me to the heart;" "the serpent that darted his envenomed sting against me;" "the dangerous viper that stung the bosom that cherished it;" "this disgrace to human nature;" "this iniquitous monk, who embezzled my money and my watch;" "this perjured and malignant monk;" "this solitary savage;" "this dexterous hypocrite;" "this hypocritical, this notorious villain;" "this monster;" "this profligate and abandoned wretch;" "this wretch who has violated every moral obligation."*

The countess's confederates had confessed themselves guilty, but there was this excuse for them—they were merely her tools and instruments. Villette, in his time of tribulation, might well protest that he was not that great friend and confidant of Madame de la Motte which he was represented to be, for, said he, "*she had no friends, and her confidence never was bestowed absolutely on any one.*" She merely instructed her instruments in what was necessary to the parts they had to perform, and kept the secret of the combinations entirely to herself.† D'Oliva had captivated the public by her ingenuous explanation of a stratagem

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. p. 329, *et seq.*

† "Requête pour le Sieur Marc-Antoine Rétaux de Villette," p. 10.

which, it was evident to every one, she had had no share in conceiving or conducting to its issue, although she had taken a part in it. And as to the forger Villette, he had rendered so great a service to the law by his complete exposure of the crime which had been committed, and had so disarmed resentment by his apparent contrition, as to call forth towards himself a kind of latent pity, in which contempt and disgust were to some extent mingled.

With regard to the countess, nothing seemed capable of subduing the wanton energy of this bold bad spirit. Confronted alternately with the cardinal, with the girl D'Oliva, with Cagliostro, and with Rétaux de Villette, besides several minor witnesses, she stood, as we have seen, face to face with them, unabashed against them all. At first, she denied everything; accused them of the very crimes she had herself committed; charged them with inventing, conducting, and executing the fraud from first to last; even swore that her two chief confederates, standing there as witnesses against her, had been suborned by the relations of the cardinal, and had formed a conspiracy to shift their own dishonour upon her. She told her judges to remember that she was a Valois, descended from the princes who had formerly reigned over them. Perching herself on this imaginary pedestal, she seemed to forget that she was a prisoner

on her trial before the country, and thundered her denunciations against her fellow-prisoners in the loudest key, every eye shrinking and quailing beneath her own. Her judges were for the moment amazed and overawed by an assurance which far surpassed anything hitherto seen in a court of justice, whilst the cardinal respectfully styled her "madame" whenever he addressed her.

Every time she was called upon to explain some circumstance with reference to which the statements of the rest of the accused tallied one with another in direct contradiction to her own assertions, those present glanced at one another expecting that she would be mute at last, and yield to the weight of evidence against her. But no; her fertile invention, like that of Napoleon at Marengo, supplied her at a moment's warning with some new combination. When asked to explain the source whence she had derived the means of supporting her extravagant expenditure during her twelve months of display, she replied that she had met with princely benefactors. The Cardinal de Rohan had alone given her 203,720 livres. Observing the looks of incredulity with which this statement was received, to account for the cardinal's unheard-of liberality, it was then that she explained to her judges that relations of a very tender nature existed

between her and the grand almoner.* She asserted, moreover, that she had got up the scene with D'Oliva in the park of Versailles to revenge herself upon the cardinal for an infidelity of which he had been guilty.† Among her other "princely benefactors" she enumerated Madame the Countess de Provence, who, she stated, had given her 13,200 livres, the Duke d'Orleans had given her 12,000 livres, the Duke and Duchess de Chartres 26,000, the Duke de Choiseul 12,000, the Duke de Penthièvre 8400, M. de Castries 3000, and the controleur-général 6000. All these statements were of course false. For instance, the Countess de Provence had only given her twelve or fifteen louis, and this immediately after the fainting scene, we imagine; the controleur-général had given her about fifty louis; and M. de Castries eight hundred, instead of three thousand livres. M. d'Ormesson, whose name she does not mention, said he had sent her a few louis *by the hands of the police;* while, as regards the eight thousand four hundred livres which she pretended she had received from the Duke de Penthièvre, the chief of his council, the Abbé de Noir, who happened to be present, rose up and indignantly declared the countess's assertion to be

* Confrontations du Cardinal de Rohan avec Madame de la Motte.

† "Compte rendu de ce qui s'est passé au Parlement," etc., p. 97.

false.* Being asked to explain what she had done with the 150,000 francs extorted from the Cardinal de Rohan in August and October, 1784, in the queen's name, Madame de la Motte calmly smiled, and with a look of offended dignity and wounded innocence, vowed that she had never so much as seen the money.

The countess did not content herself, as each damaging fact came to light, with launching tirades of abuse against the witnesses merely, "who swore," she tells us, "precisely what the cardinal's advocates pleased to put into their mouths." According to her own admissions, she on more than one occasion abused her judges to their faces,† while behind their backs she heaped upon them every variety of vituperative epithet. Commissary Chénon was "a wretch and a cunning dissembler;"‡ De Fremyn was her "inveterate enemy;"§ Dupuis de Marcé was "bought over," was a "creature of the house of Rohan," was "a monster," "a sly and venomous serpent," "a perfidious miscreant," and "prevaricated to a scandalous excess."‖ Both he and De Fremyn were "dissemblers," both "would convict the innocent rather than hear the truth;" "every ray of

* "Compte rendu de ce qui s'est passé au Parlement," etc., p. 85.

† "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. pp. 31, 71.

‡ Ibid. vol. i. p. 408. § Ibid. vol. i. p. 449.

‖ Ibid. vol. ii. pp. 18, 51, 77; and "Mémoires Justificatifs."

evidence which would have made in my favour was refracted and broken by the medium through which it passed;"* both had "the villany to alter and interpolate the records."† She further accused the deputy procureur-général and the judges of having "caballed against her;"‡ maintained that even the registrar, Le Breton, was "in the cardinal's interest."§ So, too, was the governor of the Bastille, rigorous old De Launay, to whom she moreover applies the epithet of "this perfidious governor."‖

While these examinations were proceeding, and when it was perfectly well known that Count de la Motte was residing in security on the other side of the English Channel, an abundance of legal formalities were gone through to ensure his arrest, if he had only happened to have been within the jurisdiction of the Paris Parliament. For instance, on the 15th of December, 1785, a writ of capture of the count's body was decreed, and on the 15th of the following January, Regnault, "huissier of our said court," was despatched to Bar-sur-Aube to execute the writ in question. On the 13th of

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. pp. 24, 27, 29.

† "Mémoires Justificatifs," p. 237.

‡ "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. p. 90.

§ Ibid. vol. ii. p. 109. ‖ Ibid. vol. ii. pp. 66, 67.

February it was ordered that the said Marc-Antoine-Nicolas de la Motte should be summoned that day se'nnight by public proclamation, to have law and justice done upon him, which summoning accordingly took place in the town of Bar-sur-Aube, and subsequently at Paris, "by Simonin, sole sworn crier of the king, provost and viscount of Paris, and huissier of the Châtelet of Paris, accompanied by Regnault, huissier of our said court."* Count de la Motte, however, failed to put in an appearance at either place.

* Arrêt du Parlement. "Collection complète de tous les Mémoires qui ont paru dans la fameuse affaire du Collier," etc., p. 24.

XXXII.

1786. May 29, 30.

THE CONCIERGERIE.—BEFORE THE COURT OF PARLIAMENT.—GRAND CHAMBER AND "TOURNELLE."

At eight o'clock on the night of the 29th of May, 1786, while the countess was quietly seated at supper, the gaoler of the Bastille burst into her room with the disagreeable intelligence that her business, "which looked a devilish bad affair indeed, was likely to be terminated *à la grève*" (that is, by the gallows). "Hold you in readiness at eleven o'clock," said he, "for they will begin with you." At eleven, accordingly, she was conducted to the council hall, where, after being searched by the *huissiers de la chaine*, she was taken in a coach to the Conciergerie, that grim, grey stone building, at the river's brink, on the Ile de la Cité, whose time-worn, massive, conical-capped round towers frown disdainfully upon the crowd of handsome modern buildings around,—the one unrestored

specimen of mediæval architecture of the least importance in all Paris.

"Released from the Bastille," says Madame de la Motte, "Paris appeared to me superb, but our journey seemed extremely short. It was near midnight. All the front yard before the court of the Palais de Justice was illuminated, as well as the court itself; it was as light as day. The palace was amazingly crowded; all the guard were under arms. An officer came to give me his arm to alight from the carriage. I was conducted to a large hall, which they call the *greffe*, whither I was attended by four or five hundred persons. All the passages, the tables, every place was crowded. . . . I listened with pleasure to a profusion of civil things that were said to me by the surrounding multitude, many of whom expressed very warm and sincere wishes for my success, and seemed much pleased at the manner in which I returned their civilities. About two o'clock, finding myself fatigued, I expressed a desire to take some rest; and after paying my respects to this numerous company, the keeper's wife conducted me to the apartment prepared for my reception."*

At six o'clock the Parliament, both Grand Chamber

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. p. 93, *et seq.*

and Tournelle,* began to assemble. The princes and princesses of the house of Condé, allied to that of the cardinal, and of the houses of Rohan, Soubise and Guéménée, had gone into mourning, and thus significantly attired, placed themselves in a line in the corridor along which the councillors of the Grand Chamber had to pass, so that they might salute them as they entered the hall.† Upwards of sixty judges took their seats. The sittings were long and numerous, as it was necessary to read over the reports of the previous proceedings. A master of requests, a friend of the cardinal's, took notes of all that the judges said while this was going on, and passed them to the cardinal's counsel, who found means of communicating with him, and of advising him as to the course he should pursue when under examination. The counsellor d'Epréménil too, a warm partisan of the grand almoner's, likewise apprised his friends of many particulars which it was important for them to be acquainted with.‡

The countess was in readiness, in the event of being

* The "Tournelle" was the Chamber that had the judging of criminal matters.

† "Mémoires de Marie-Antoinette," by Madame Campan, vol. ii. p. 290.

‡ "Mémoires pour servir," etc., par l'Abbé Georgel, vol. ii. pp. 179, 196.

summoned, by about half-past six o'clock. "It has been said," remarks she, "that I was tricked out and dressed; but the truth is, I had plain cambric linen, a cambric cloak, and for a bonnet a half-undress gauze, without ribbons, and was even without powder in my hair. The gauze cap which I wore on my head very little squared with the ridiculous assertion that I was dressed. They began with poor Oliva,* who was delayed with her child. [She had given birth to an infant since her arrest.] The keeper's wife, to whom I expressed a desire to see her, brought her to my chamber, which was very near. I consoled the mother, but I gently reproved her for the wrongs she had done me in following so blindly the advice of her advocates relative to the supposed letter of the queen which she said I had shown her." †

The countess is mistaken in supposing that D'Oliva was the first to be interrogated. It was Villette who had that honour. He entered the hall and took his place on the *sellette* with "his eyes bathed in tears," and during his examination showed more good faith and repentance than he had heretofore done, avowing all his crimes without the slightest reserve. It was

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. p. 96.

† "Compte rendu de ce qui s'est passé au Parlement," etc., p. 114.

remarked, however, that for the first time he seemed anxious to accuse the cardinal, whom he had previously sought to shield, by maintaining that he had been the dupe of the falsehoods and intrigues of Madame de la Motte. Villette's examination was soon over, and between ten and eleven o'clock the keeper of the Conciergerie and his son conducted the countess up "the little staircase," which all criminals were obliged to ascend. De Fremyn, "the dissembler," then came forward and took her hand, and led her to the hall where the judges were assembled. In this well-known apartment of the ancient Palais de Justice, where in the early days of the French monarchy the kings of the Capetian race were accustomed to keep their court, the Grand Chamber of the Paris Parliament had held its sittings for upwards of a century; and here it was that, under the presidency of the king, the famous *lits de justice* were likewise held. At the present day the Court of Cassation, the supreme court of appeal in France in matters criminal as well as civil, holds its "solemn audiences" in this celebrated chamber, the interior of which, in this renovating age, has not a single trace of its ancient mediæval character remaining to it.*

* "To-day," writes M. Berryer, in 1837, "when my fancy carries itself back to fifty years or so ago"—the very date of the Necklace trial—"towards the Palais de Justice, I recognize neither the same

"The appearance of the hall, crowded as it was in every part, was to me," remarks Madame de la Motte, "a most tremendous sight; it was an awful, an alarming crisis. It is here that, accused without guilt, I was

antique structure, nor the same internal divisions, nor those innumerable jurisdictions of which it was the seat, nor that inconceivable flood of persons interested, whose tumultuous waves were agitated every day for hours together, and more especially from noon until two o'clock.

"Outside the edifice was a large staircase, crowded with shops piled one above the other, flanked by the offices of writers, starting from the angle of the handsome railings, on the side of the Pont-au-Change, extending to the circle of the old Cour du Mai, and serving as a girdle to the Sainte-Chapelle, a confused mass of steps and stalls pictured with such animation in the Lutrin of Boileau. Who does not recollect the inquiry made by the countryman of an *avocat*, laden with several bags of briefs, on catching sight of this grotesque staircase, 'Sir,' said he, 'will you be kind enough to tell me what that building is?' 'It is a mill,' replied the over-worked *avocat*. 'Ah! I guessed as much,' remarked the countryman, 'from seeing so many donkeys carrying their sacks to it.'

"Under the immense vaulted galleries, and also surrounding all the columns of the great hall, were more rows of shops filled with merchandise of all kinds, which had caused the name of *Palais Marchand* to be given to this temple of justice. The Parliament alone occupied seven large halls—the grand chamber, the *tournelle*, the three halls of inquests, and the halls of requests. The grand chamber, with its arched roof springing from gilded brackets, was an austere-looking place. Perched above were two galleries reserved for the accommodation of great personages, and which I have seen occupied, among others, by the Emperor Joseph II., the unfortunate Gustavus, king of Sweden, and by the Count and Countess de Nord, since Emperor and Empress of Russia."—*Souvenirs de M. Bérryer*, vol. ii. p. 25, *et seq.*

tried without justice, and condemned without proof, the accusation against me being supported on the narrow foundation of false testimony, apparent even to my very judges as contradictory and replete with absurdity. Too soon I understood the ambiguous meaning of my counsel, who, in attempting to prepare me for the occasion, had spoken to me of the '*sellette*.' I heard a number of voices tending to encourage me, and striving to inspire me with confidence. 'Must I then occupy this seat?' exclaimed I; 'must I be forced into this *sellette*, formed only for the reception of the guilty?' Agitated by the most heartrending sensations, I remained a long time in a most dreadful situation, my knees knocking together, and my whole frame trembling with agitation, and feeling myself unable to articulate a single syllable. At length, but I scarce know how, I found myself seated, overwhelmed with shame at finding myself, surrounded by such a number of judges, by such a crowd of spectators."*

Such is the account which the countess herself gives of this incident. A contemporary record of the proceedings states, however, that she seated herself in the *sellette* with an impudent air, which she preserved throughout the two hours she was under examination,

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. pp. 96-9.

and indeed until she quitted this seat of shame.' After she was seated she heard, she says, "a general cry, which was re-echoed throughout the hall: 'Proceed, proceed, madame; take courage!' This encouragement, from so many of my judges, supported my sinking spirits; their looks animated me, and by degrees I was in a condition to answer them with that *consistency of truth and energetic fortitude which innocence alone inspires.*

"So great was the malice of De Fremyn against me that he could not help exhibiting, even in the very face of my judges, a degree of rudeness and indelicacy which, upon such an occasion, in such a situation, but ill became him. This man came up to me rudely and desired me to take off my hood. I looked at him very attentively, and said, 'Even before this august assembly you prove at this very moment how much you are my enemy.' The assembly applauded what I said, and remonstrated with an air of disapprobation, 'Oh! why do you so? Let the lady wear her calash.'

"The chief president, M. de Aligre, now read to me my first interrogatory, which was expressed in so very few words that my judges could not determine from my reply whether I was innocent or not. 'I should wish,'

* "Compte rendu de ce qui s'est passé au Parlement," etc., p. 115.

I remarked, 'that my judges would interrogate me upon those points which have relation to the Necklace; to these I am particularly anxious to reply, that I may have an opportunity of demonstrating what I have already advanced, what I have above a hundred times repeated, and what I have never swerved from.' The judges all exclaimed that I was right, and were unanimously agreed to make some additions to the first interrogatory, which did not mention a syllable of the leading point of accusation—the Diamond Necklace. 'The cardinal has stated,' said they, 'that he brought the Necklace himself to your house at Versailles, and that he waited in an alcove till the arrival of a person who was to fetch it on the part of the queen; that you insinuate it was one of her majesty's pages; that this man, as described by the cardinal, is very dark, has large black eyebrows, thin and tall, with large black eyes, his figure extremely slender. The cardinal observes, also, that the alcove was about half open.'

"'Absurdities like these, gentlemen,' rejoined I, 'raise my indignation, and I am convinced they will have a similar effect upon you.' I then pointed out the contradictions in the cardinal's assertions, explaining how, when he saw M. Villette at the confrontation, he immediately said that he recollected his profile, and that he was the very same person to whom I gave the

Necklace; M. Villette being, in every respect, diametrically the reverse of the cardinal's description. I called the particular attention of my judges to this circumstance, as it showed them the kind of reliance they could place on the remainder of the cardinal's allegations. 'Even if there did come a man, as the cardinal pretends,' I went on to say, 'does it wear a semblance of propriety, that if he brought a letter or note written to me, the cardinal should act upon that, even although the note should say the bearer was to be trusted with the jewels in question? Now the cardinal ought not to have returned me this note, which would then have become a receipt for him; both this note and the other, which mentions the receipt of the jewel, saying, "it is superb," and which MM. St. James, Bassenge, and Böhmer, all depose to having seen in the cardinal's hands. I request him to bring these letters before my judges, as well as two hundred others which he has read to me, and told me that they all came from the queen; and ask that he should be called upon to declare whether these letters were written by M. Villette. I hope you will emphatically insist that the cardinal shall produce them to the court, to be compared with that same "approval" of the treaty with the jewellers, which Villette himself confesses to have written. If my judges will take the trouble to examine

these, I dare affirm that they will find letters in three different hands, but not a single one in the hand of M. Villette.'

"'Messieurs St. James and Böhmer have deposed that they have read a letter in the hands of the cardinal upon the terrace at Versailles, containing this expression: "I am perfectly contented with the jewel; it is superb," &c. These persons have further deposed that the cardinal at the same time informed them that this letter came from the queen; and I, for my part, gentlemen, repeat what I have previously deposed,* and do now positively affirm and most solemnly declare, that I have also seen—that I have also myself read that letter.'

"The president then asked me if I really believed that letter came from the queen, as well as the two hundred other letters which the cardinal showed me? I replied, that 'the cardinal had given me his confidence and trusted me with his secrets. During the whole time I was so intrusted, he told me that he had seen the queen, and received letters from her;' which was all I could, consistent with delicacy and propriety, permit myself to say.

* Nothing of the kind is to be found in the records of the countess's examinations.

"I had scarce uttered these words, when four abbés all rose up at once, though at some distance from each other, and began their speeches together. Nothing was to be heard but the hoarse jargon of contention. At length the discord abated, and the three gave way to the first; but as his question was of no consequence, I did not condescend to make any reply. At this, many persons present significantly shrugged their shoulders. The second and third were of a piece with the first; the fourth, as having more pretension to wit, I thought it necessary to reply to. This was the Abbé Sabattier, whose stentorian voice almost shook the foundations of the hall. 'The countess,' said he, 'pretends that she has not interfered in any way concerning the sale of thé Necklace. Why, then, when she was asked, "Who those persons were she had at her table?" did she reply that "They were persons with whom she had business?" I maintain that this answer goes to prove that she has been concerned in the sale of the Necklace; for if it were not to treat with them respecting it, why should she have any business with them?' I looked at this great and penetrating genius with all that admiration which so shrewd a remark was entitled to. 'The question,' said I, 'that the Abbé Sabattier puts to me is destitute of common sense; it is, therefore, unnecessary to reply to it.' All the voices then raised themselves

with one accord, bawling to the registrar, 'Write down what madame says, that the Abbé Sabattier's question is unworthy an answer, and has in it neither reason nor common sense!'

"The abbé, a good deal nettled, exclaimed, loudly, 'Gentlemen, I have a right to speak without being an object of derision, however much what I may have said may amuse you.' At this they all burst into a roar of laughter. As soon as they had finished exercising their risibility, 'Gentlemen,' said I, 'the questions of Messieurs the abbés do not in the least surprise me. I am forewarned that these gentlemen, who are about five in number, have had some hopes of recruiting their party by the addition of a sixth, who would all give their votes to the cardinal.' The registrar was now ordered, with a great deal of solemnity, to read to me the question of this aforesaid sagacious abbé, whom I answered in the following manner:—

"'Gentlemen, the jewellers have indeed charged me in their depositions, but in their confrontations, where they were with me face to face, they have discharged me, since in carrying them the cardinal's note which requested their address, Bassenge admits that I desired him to use particular caution with the cardinal. I ask my judges if the jewellers are under no obligation to me, however slight it may be? Am I not the primary

cause of the sale of the Necklace [no doubt of it, and the jewellers must indeed have felt greatly obliged to the countess for the share she had altogether in the business] since it was to the cardinal I spoke of it, who purchased it, he says, for the queen. Laporte himself positively deposed that I had told him above a hundred times that I would have nothing to do in the sale of the Necklace, and even that I absolutely rejected the offer of two hundred thousand livres in diamonds. I would further observe to my judges that if I had wished to have appropriated the Necklace to my own use, I should certainly, in that case, have accepted the jewellers' offer, so as to conceal my intention of stealing the Necklace.'

"M. de Bretignières, honorary counsellor, who sat near me, now asked me a question. 'Since then, madame,' said he, 'you have read and seen such a great number of letters in the cardinal's hands, you can tell us what they contained, and if the cardinal answered them?' I replied, that the question was extremely indiscreet and dangerous, and that it had better be put to the cardinal, who could be commanded to produce these letters, in which case the counsellor could satisfy his curiosity by reading them himself. My judges still insisting on clear categorical answers respecting these letters, I was obliged to reply as to their contents. 'Yes, gentlemen,' answered I, 'one of them makes

mention of an appointment broken—of their pleasure at meeting; others "thee'd" and "thou'd" the cardinal.' 'Does madame really believe that these letters came from the queen—were written by the queen herself?' I do not know whether I ought to declare my thoughts concerning the acts of a queen, whom I am bound to honour and respect.' 'But did not madame think these expressions very strong—too strong to induce her to believe that they came from the sovereign?' 'That was the reason of my first expressing astonishment to the cardinal.' 'What answer did he make?'

"I was at length obliged to answer fully the questions which were put, feeling, after being so persecuted, that I could not retreat; but I cannot now remember the immense number of questions I was asked, nor the answers I gave. 'Bravo! bravo!' frequently exclaimed many of my judges. 'Certainly, certainly,' said they, clapping their hands, 'tis well replied.' 'Let the lady alone,' cried out numerous voices.'"

The "Compte rendu" of the Necklace case fortunately enables us to supply the deficiency in the countess's memory with respect to the foregoing incident. It seems that, in speaking of a particular letter which she first of all stated commenced with the words "Send *to* the little countess," and which letter she asserted had been shown to her by the cardinal as written

by the queen, she continually misquoted the opening phrase, converting it into "Send *by* the little countess." M. Barillon, after pointing out this variation in her evidence, asked of her the reason of it—a simple enough question, not requiring, one would think, much consideration to answer. The countess, however, after considerable hesitation, remarked with an air of mystery that she did not wish to reply to it; because, by doing so, she would offend the queen. Whereupon, several of the judges represented to her that the sacred persons of their majesties could not suffer by any statement she might make, and that she owed the whole truth to justice. Then, getting angry, she exclaimed, that the letter really commenced with the words, "Send *thou* the little countess," and she added that the cardinal had shown her upwards of two hundred letters in which the queen "thou'd" and "thee'd" the grand almoner, and made assignations with him, several of which had taken place.*

The countess tells us that she now made observations on the whole of the accusation against her. "All the questions which had been addressed to me," she goes on to say, "together with my answers, were written down and read over to me. The president then asked me if

* "Compte rendu de ce qui s'est passé au Parlement," etc., p. 115.

I had anything more to add, to which I replied in the negative, only I particularly entreated that my judges would condescend to examine thoroughly into this business with an impartial eye, from whence I could not but entertain the strongest hopes that their definitive judgment would be in my favour."

"My enemies," remarks Madame de la Motte, "have laboured to convey the impression that before my judges I was bold and loquacious. They accused me, too, of pride. They were also kind enough to put words into my mouth which I never made use of, making me say, with respect to the cardinal, 'I am going to confound this great knave.'"*

Whether these accusations are true or false, we have no means of judging. It is quite certain, however, that the countess considered she had acquitted herself in rather a smart manner before her judges; and when they laughed at and cheered her sallies against the abbés, she no doubt thought she had succeeded in hood-winking not a few of them, quite forgetting that though mankind may be ready enough to be amused, it is not invariably at the expense of its reason and its judgment.

"After I had made my obeisances to the assembly,"

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. p. 100, *et seq.*

continues the countess, "I withdrew, and was conducted by the keeper of the Conciergerie and a great many gentlemen whom I did not know, to his wife's apartment. All paid me their compliments, all expressed their approbation, observing that I defended myself well, and that even an experienced advocate could not have pleaded my cause better."*

As soon as the countess had retired, the first president gave orders for the *sellette* to be removed, and sent to inform the cardinal that, this having been done, he could present himself before the court.† The Prince de Rohan entered, attired in a long purple robe, the mourning colour of cardinals, and with scarlet stockings and cap, and wearing his orders round his neck, saltier-wise. "He had," says his admiring grand-vicar, in his most grandiloquent style, "the noble presence of a man profoundly affected, but calm, in the midst of his troubles; his countenance expressed alike respect, modesty, and dignity, which disposed his judges favourably towards him. He held himself erect at the bar, his pallid complexion indicating the ravages of a recent illness which had nearly proved fatal to him. The first president, at the request of several of the coun-

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. p. 118.

† "Anecdotes du règne de Louis XVI.," vol. i. p. 410.

sellors, invited him to be seated during the long examination which he was about to undergo. The prince marked his sensibility of the proffered favour by a profound bow, and only availed himself of it at the third invitation. Questioned successively by certain of his judges, who hoped to obtain satisfactory information on points not perfectly plain, he astonished them by the clearness, the precision, and the force of his answers. He perceived the great interest which his humiliating situation inspired, and profited by it frankly to develop the various false steps which his good faith and credulity had caused him to take. 'I was completely blinded,' exclaimed he, 'by the intense desire which I felt to regain the good graces of the queen.' This touching scene excited a profound sensation in the breasts of the members of this august tribunal which was about to decide the fate of one of the highest personages in the kingdom."*

When the examination of the cardinal was concluded, Cagliostro was summoned before the court. He presented himself before his judges dressed in a green velvet coat, embroidered over with gold lace; his hair, plaited from the top of his head, fell in small curls over his shoulders, which gave him a singular appearance,

* "Mémoires pour servir," etc. par l'Abbé Georgel, vol. ii. p. 197.

not altogether inconsistent with the character of the charlatan he was commonly believed to be. "Who are you?—whence do you come?" was asked of him. "I am a noble traveller," he replied. At these words the countenances of the judges brightened up, and observing that they seemed well-disposed towards him, Cagliostro entered boldly upon his defence, intermingling his bad French with Greek, Arabic, Latin, and Italian. His expression, his gestures, and his vivacity were as amusing as the subject-matter of his discourse, and he quitted the hall perfectly satisfied with having made his judges smile.*

The Demoiselle d'Oliva was examined the last. As she had already confessed all she knew, and had nothing to add to her previous testimony, the interrogatories addressed to her were not many, and she was soon permitted to retire.

* "Anecdotes du règne de Louis XVI.," vol. i. p. 400.

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE

XXXIII.

1786. May 31.[1]

DEBATE IN THE COURT OF PARLIAMENT.— THE SENTENCES.

From half-past four in the morning of the 31st of May all the members of the cardinal's family, women as well as men, were assembled at the door of the parliament chamber, in order to be in the way of the judges as they passed into the hall. "They employed," we are told, "no other means of solicitation beyond preserving a mournful silence, in which might be discerned alike their grief, their firmness, and their respect for the throne and for the laws. This mode of solicitation, so noble, so worthy of the illustrious houses of Rohan, Soubise, Guéménée, and Lorraine, and at the same time so perfectly conformable to the nature of the affair in which the cardinal was implicated, made a more profound impression upon his judges than all the eloquence which was exercised in his behalf." *

* "Compte rendu de ce qui s'est passé au Parlement," etc., p. 118.

It is no doubt true enough that the members of the cardinal's family did not openly appeal to his judges in his favour, but it is equally certain that during the continuance of the process every effort was made by the grand almoner's friends to increase the number of his adherents among the councillors who had to judge the case. We know that the prime minister, the Count de Vergennes, was a secret partisan of his, and we know, moreover, that M. de Laurencel, the procureur-général's substitute, drew up a list of names of members of the Great Chamber, wherein he set forth against each the means that had been employed to gain that particular councillor's vote. This list was found in after years among the papers which Marie-Antoinette intrusted to M. Campan during the revolution, and which his daughter-in-law, Madame Campan, afterwards had under her charge. From this document it would seem that ladies of the highest position had not scrupled to accept large bribes to exercise their powers of seduction in the cardinal's behalf, and it was by these means, we are told, that some of the most venerable and most respectable among the judges had been corrupted.*

Between five and six o'clock the Parliament, Grand Chamber, and Tournelle, had assembled. The number

* "Memoirs of Marie-Antoinette," by Madame Campan, vol. ii. p. 295.

of members present amounted to sixty-two, which subsequently became reduced to forty-nine, when the clerical councillors had retired, as they were obliged to do, when it was found that the judgment involved afflictive punishments.*

The proceedings were opened by the procureur-général, M. Joly de Fleury, who had been in former years controleur-général, in which capacity he had experienced his share of persecution at the hands of Madame de la Motte, with whom he had now the opportunity of clearing off a few old scores. In a most able speech he submitted to the parliament the following extremely fair proposition: First, that the Parliament should adjudge the "*approuvés*" and the pretended signature of the queen to be forgeries; secondly, that Count de la Motte should be sentenced to the galleys for life, by reason of his contumacy; thirdly, that Villette should undergo a similar sentence, and further, that he should be whipped and branded, and his effects be confiscated; fourthly, that Madame de la Motte should be confined for life in the prison of the Salpêtrière, after being whipped and branded, her effects to be likewise confiscated; fifthly, that the Cardinal de Rohan should ask pardon of the king and queen for having been wanting in respect

* "Anecdotes du règne de Louis XVI.," vol. i. p. 412.

towards their sacred persons; that he should be banished the precincts of the court, and that, during a period to be fixed by the Parliament, he should be suspended from his office of grand almoner; that he should be sentenced to such alms-giving as the Parliament might direct; and, finally, that he should be kept in confinement until he shall have obeyed and satisfied the judgment now given. Sixthly, that D'Oliva be put out of court. Seventhly, that Cagliostro be acquitted.*

The party opposed to the queen at once rejected these proposals. No sooner had M. Joly de Fleury done speaking, than M. de Barillon, a partisan of the cardinal's, started up and exclaimed that the conclusions to which they had just listened were not those of a procureur-général, but rather those of a minister whom it was not difficult to recognize; alluding, of course, to the Baron de Breteuil. The advocate-general, M. Séguier, to the surprise of the excited counsellors, joined in the attack upon his colleague, whom he personally denounced.† M. de Mineres passed in review all the various impostures of Madame de la Motte, maintained that the cardinal was not her only victim, that the

* Extract from the Imperial Archives given in M. Campardon's "Marie-Antoinette et le procès du Collier," p. 149.

† "Mémoires du Baron de Besenval," vol. iii. p. 135.

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jewellers had been equally deceived, for they loaded her with thanks for the exertions she had made in their behalf, and offered her presents, whereas, neither thanks nor presents were offered to the cardinal, whom the jewellers regarded simply as an instrument chosen by the countess to conduct the negotiation: other speakers instanced the letter of thanks which the cardinal had repeatedly advised the jewellers to send to the queen, as a convincing proof of his good faith. M. de Jonville, third master of requests, attributed the evidence which appeared to tell most against the cardinal entirely to the bad memory of Böhmer, of which he gave several proofs.* It was the speeches of Counsellors D'Epréménil and Fretteau, and the Abbé Sabattier, however, that produced the greatest effect. This celebrated trio showed the utmost boldness in attacking the court and braving its anger, and spoke vehemently in favour of the cardinal's complete acquittal.† Singularly enough, it was these very same three men who, a year or two afterwards, stirred up the parliament to refuse to register the royal edicts, and were among the first to demand the convocation of the States-general, for which acts of temerity the two last were packed off by *lettres-de-cachet*—the

* "Compte rendu de ce qui s'est passé au Parlement," p. 123.

† "Memoirs of Marie-Antoinette," by Madame Campan, vol. ii. p. 293.

one to the Castle of Ham, the other to dreary Mont St. Michel, and D'Epréménil, a few months later, to the Isle of Sainte-Marguerite (Calypso's enchanted island), whence he returned—the Revolution having made rapid strides meanwhile—"a red-hot royalist," to finish his career under the axe of the guillotine. M. Robert de St. Vincent was another of those who spoke in favour of the Prince de Rohan, who, he maintained, had been deceived by the most plausible lies. He denied the legality of the procureur-général's conclusions, and the power of the Parliament to incorporate them in its judgment, and asked for the cardinal's acquittal. He condemned, too, the publicity given to the proceedings, and expressed his regret that the king and queen had not been advised by some wiser minister, who would have been more regardful of the dignity of the crown. The president, D'Ormesson—the same who sent the countess a few louis "by the hands of the police"—offered an amendment to the procureur-général's proposition, to the effect that the cardinal should retain his offices and dignities, but that he should be required to ask pardon of the queen for the offence he had committed. There was no difference of opinion among the judges as to the measure of punishment to be meted out to Madame de la Motte, excepting that MM. Robert de Saint Vincent and Dyonis du Sejour pressed the passing sentence of death upon

her. As her crime, however, had been unforeseen by the laws, this penalty could not be legally inflicted.

The discussion, which was very animated, continued throughout the day. At two o'clock in the afternoon the sitting was suspended, in order that the judges might dine at a table which the first president had had set out for them in the hall of St. Louis; the greater number, we are told, ate standing, and by half-past three the sitting was resumed. Between nine and ten o'clock at night, after the final voting had taken place, the following judgment was delivered.†

"The Court, the Great Chamber assembled, in the exercise of its jurisdiction and on the conclusions of the procureur-général of the king, declares that the words '*approuvé*' and the signature, '*Marie-Antoinette de France,*' have been fradulently appended to the margin of the document, entitled, 'Propositions and Conditions of Price and Payment' for the Necklace brought in question at this trial, and which are falsely attributed to the queen; orders that the said words '*approuvé,*' and the said signature, '*Marie-Antoinette de France,*' shall be struck out and erased from the said document, and that mention shall be made of the present decree on the same, which will be and shall remain

* "Compte rendu de ce qui s'est passé au Parlement," etc., p. 121.

† "Anecdotes du règne de Louis XVI.," vol. i. p. 412.

deposited in the criminal registry of the Court, of all of which affirmation shall be made by the court registrar.

"Adjudging the consequences of the contumacy declared good and valid by the decree of the Court of the 10th of April, 1786, against Marc-Antoine-Nicolas de la Motte accused, absent—

"For the facts proved by the proceedings condemns the said Marc-Antoine-Nicolas de la Motte to be flogged and beaten naked with rods, and branded with a hot iron on the right shoulder with the letters 'G. A. L.' by the public executioner; this done, to be led and conducted to the galleys of the king, there to be detained to serve our said king as convict for life.

"Declares all the goods of the said Marc-Antoine-Nicolas de la Motte acquired and confiscated to the king, or whomsoever he may appoint, a fine of two hundred livres to the king being previously levied thereon: which sentence, by reason of the contumacy of the said De la Motte, shall be written upon a tablet, which shall be affixed to a post planted for this purpose in the Place de Grève (place of execution).

"Banishes Louis-Marc-Antoine Rétaux de Villette from the kingdom for life.

"Condemns Jeanne de Valois de Saint-Remi de Luz, wife of Marc-Antoine-Nicolas de la Motte, having a

halter round her neck, to be flogged and beaten naked with rods, and branded with a hot iron upon both shoulders with the letter 'V,' by the public executioner; this done, to be led and conducted to the prison of the Salpêtrière, there to be detained and confined for life.

"Declares likewise all the goods of the said De la Motte, and the said Rétaux de Villette, acquired and confiscated to the king, or to whomsoever he may appoint; a fine of two hundred livres to the king being previously levied upon each.

"Upon the complaint and accusation brought at the request of the procureur-général of the king against Marie-Nicole Le Guay, *dite* d'Oliva or Dessigny, puts the parties out of court and discharges the process.

"Discharges Alexandre de Cagliostro and Louis Réné Edouard de Rohan from the complaint and accusation brought against them at the request of the procureur-général of the king.

"Orders, that the memorials printed for Jeanne de Saint-Remi de Valois de la Motte shall be and shall continue to be suppressed, as containing false statements, injurious and calumnious alike against the said Cardinal de Rohan and the said De Cagliostro.

"Upon the remainder of the request of the said De Cagliostro, alike against Commissary Chénon and De Launay, governor of the Bastille, puts it out of court,

without prejudice to his appeal when and how he may be advised; upon the rest of the demands, requests, and conclusions of the parties puts these out of court.

"Gives permission to the Cardinal de Rohan and the said De Cagliostro to cause the present judgment to be printed and posted up wheresoever it may seem good to them."*

Contemporary accounts agree in stating that something like ten thousand people were assembled in the courts and passages of the palace and in the neighbourhood of their approaches, all anxious to learn the judgment of the parliament.† Crowds streamed across the Pont Neuf, the Pont Saint-Michel, the Pont-au-Change, and the Ponts Nôtre-Dame, coming from all parts of Paris. There were courtiers, men of letters, financiers, abbés, avocats, avoués, shopkeepers and their wives, students, working men, soldiers, police agents, men and women from the *halles*, and idlers of every description. "About nine o'clock at night," says Madame de la Motte, "I heard a report like that of acclamation in the courtyard. I ran to look out of one of the windows which commanded a view of the court, and saw crowds

* "Arrêt du Parlement," preserved in the Imperial Archives, X^2 2576.

† "Mémoires Historiques et Politiques du règne de Louis XVI.," par l'Abbé Soulaire, vol. vi. p. 73.

of people running very fast by the great staircase. I could not distinctly understand what they said, except that one of them, who was very near the window, cried out, 'Bravo! bravo! Upon my word, it is very fortunate for the cardinal; but what will become of poor Madame de la Motte?' The moment these words vibrated in my ear, they were like an electric shock. Unable to sustain myself, my legs bent under me: I tottered and sank into a chair. When I was a little recovered, the keeper of the Conciergerie, assisted by his son, conducted me to my apartment, where having left me for a few minutes, with a view of gaining authentic information of the definitive sentence of the court, they soon after returned. 'The cardinal,' said they, 'is out of court, and delivered from further process; Cagliostro and D'Oliva are the same; Villette, madame, is banished, as well as you.' 'For how long?' 'I believe, for three years; but everybody blames the judges. We think there will be some alteration.'"*

It is likely enough that, out of consideration for the countess and her well-known violent temper, the foregoing innocent piece of deception was practised upon her by the keeper of the Conciergerie, who soon afterwards prevailed upon her to retire to rest. Meanwhile

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. pp. 120-1.

the judges were leaving the palace, pressed upon by an immense crowd of people, who made the walls of the old building ring again with their acclamations. A thousand voices shouted out, "*Vive le Parlement!*" "*Vive le Cardinal!*" The market women, throwing themselves in the way of the departing counsellors, vociferated their applause, and offered them bouquets of flowers. M. Titon, one of the reporters of the case, who, with his fellow-reporter, Dupuis de Marcé, had adopted the conclusions of the procureur-général; threw the flowers back again with marked ill-humour, to let the people see that he merited no share of this popular ovation. On MM. Target and De Bonnières, the two of the cardinal's advocates who had advised him to take his trial before the parliament, seeking to enter the record office to communicate the judgment to their client, curt old De Launay, governor of the Bastille, who had the Prince de Rohan in his charge, informed them that he had received specific orders from the Baron de Breteuil not to allow anyone to speak to his prisoner. On its being represented to him that the cardinal was no longer in legal custody, since he had been formally discharged of the accusation against him by the judgment just rendered, and on the bystanders expressing their disapprobation by loud murmurs, he eventually permitted the two advocates to enter. "The cardinal,

robed in the Roman purple," says Cagliostro, "was carried off in triumph;"* and so he was, but to the Bastille. As soon as the interview between the grand almoner and his counsel had terminated, De Launay informed him that, the parliament having separated, he would have to return to that gloomy state prison. Hearing this, the cardinal proceeded to follow his gaoler, whereupon the people rushed forward, and kissed both his hands and his garments, ran beside the carriage which conveyed him, shouting their congratulations, and only quitted it when he had disappeared within the walls of the grim old fortress.

* "Memorial for the Count de Cagliostro."

XXXIV.

1786. JUNE.

THE SENTENCES CARRIED OUT.—"WHAT IS RESERVED FOR THE BLOOD OF THE BOURBONS?"

THE evening following that on which judgment was pronounced, the gates of the Bastille were opened to the cardinal, who returned to his hôtel at half-past ten o'clock at night, where he found the members of his family and the people of the *quartier* waiting to receive him, and to testify their joy at his acquittal.*

Cagliostro shared the popular ovations. He, too, was conducted back in a sort of triumph to the Bastille, where he remained until he recovered possession of the portfolio and other effects, minus, however, the one hundred thousand francs in cash and bills, he tells us, seized in his house by Commissary Chénon. He left the Bastille late at night in a hackney coach. The

* "Compte rendu de ce qui s'est passé au Parlement," etc., p. 153. *et seq.*

evening, he says, was dark, the part of the city he lived in retired, but when he arrived at his house in the Rue Saint-Claude he found himself welcomed by the acclamations of thousands. The doors of his hôtel had been burst open; the courtyard, the staircase, the very apartments—indeed, every corner of the house was crowded with people.*

Rétaux de Villette tells us that he was recommended by both the gaoler and the executioner to take his departure as rapidly as possible—advice which he was only too ready to follow. "Outside the city gate," he says, "a great man, who belonged, I believe, to the cardinal, took me on one side, and gave me a purse of fifty-five louis, and a note to the Abbé d'Aimar, to whom, he told me, I was to make known my future wants. When, however, I desired to profit by these instructions I could obtain no reply."† Cagliostro says that Villette was banished in the ignominious sense of the term—that is, led out of prison, with a rope round his neck, by the executioner, who, on their arrival at the city gate, gave him, first of all, a loaf, and then a kick behind, with strict injunctions never to return.‡

* "Memorial for the Count de Cagliostro," p. 27.

† "Mémoire Historique des Intrigues de la Cour," etc., par Rétaux de Villette, p. 70.

‡ "Memorial for the Count de Cagliostro," p. 27.

The fifty-five louis, however, was some sort of salve to the indignity offered to the person of the ex-gendarme.

Mademoiselle d'Oliva, on being told that she was adjudged "*hors de cour*," thought it to be a prohibition against her going to Versailles any more, and faithfully promised that she would observe it.*

It will be readily understood that the sentences of the parliament excited the indignation of both the king and the queen. The former inveighed against the judgment as being a most outrageous one. The cardinal, he said, knew too well the usages of the court to have been idiot enough to believe that Madame de la Motte was admitted near the queen, or was charged with any such commission as that of the purchase of the Necklace.†

As for Marie-Antoinette, she was profoundly afflicted: "Come and weep with me, come and console your friend, my dear Polignac," she writes; "the judgment which has just been pronounced is a shameful insult. I am bathed in tears of grief and despair. One can flatter oneself with nothing when perversity exhausts every means to crush my spirit. What ingratitude!

* Hon. W. Eden to Mr. Pitt, in "Lord Auckland's Journals and Correspondence," vol. i. p. 132.

† "Memoirs of Marie-Antoinette," by Madame Campan, vol. ii. p. 293.

But I shall triumph over the wicked by tripling the good which I have always tried to do. They will feel greater pleasure in afflicting me than I shall in revenging myself upon them. Come, my dear heart." *

In writing to her sister, the queen does not restrain her indignation that the cardinal, whom she believed to be the most guilty in the affair, should have been allowed to escape. It is thus she expresses herself:—

"1st June, 1786.

"I need not tell you, my dear sister, how indignant I feel at the judgment which has just been pronounced by the parliament. It has no respect for royalty; it is a shameful insult, and I am bathed in tears of despair. What! a man who had the audacity to lend himself to that indecent and infamous scene in the arbour, who supposed that he had an assignation with the Queen of France, with the wife of his king, that the queen had received a rose from him,† and had suffered him to throw himself at her feet, should not, when a throne is concerned, be held guilty of high treason, but should be simply regarded as one who had been deceived! It is odious and revolting. Pity me, my good

* Autograph letter from Marie-Antoinette to the Duchess de Polignac, in the collection of M. Feuillet de Conches.

† An inadvertent error has been here committed. It was the cardinal who received the rose.

sister; I did not merit this injury, I who have endeavoured to do good to all who surround me, and who only remember that I am the daughter of Marie-Thérèse, to show myself, as she recommended me when embracing me at my departure, French to the very bottom of my heart. To be so sacrificed to a perjured priest, to a lewd intriguer, how grievous! But do not think that I shall allow myself to do anything unworthy of me. I have declared that I will never seek to revenge myself beyond doubling the good which I have already done. I need not tell you that the king is indignant like myself; he exiles the cardinal to La Chaise-Dieu, and Cagliostro is expelled from France. Adieu! My children are well. We all embrace you, and press you to our hearts." *

To Madame Campan, who knew more of the particulars of the intrigue than any one else about the queen, Marie-Antoinette mournfully said: "Make me your compliments of condolence; the intriguer who wished to ruin me, or to obtain money by abusing my name, and forging my signature, has just been acquitted. But as a Frenchwoman, also receive my compliments of condolence. A people is indeed unhappy to have for supreme tribunal a set of men who are swayed

* "Lettres et Documents Inédits de Louis XVI. et Marie-Antoinette," par M. Feuillet de Conches, vol. i. p. 161.

by their own passions, many of whom are susceptible of corruption, while the remainder are possessed of an audacity which they are only too ready to manifest against authority, as they have just shown in so marked a manner." *

"At this epoch," says Madame Campan, "the happy days of the queen terminated. Adieu for ever to the peaceful and simple pleasures of Trianon, to the fêtes where once shone the magnificence, intellect, and good taste of the court of France; adieu, above all, to that consideration and respect, the forms of which surround the throne, but of which the reality alone is its solid base." †

Spite of the judgment of the parliament, the cardinal was not allowed to go entirely scot-free. The king at once wrote to the Baron de Breteuil, requiring him to go to the cardinal, and demand from him his resignation of his office of grand almoner, and the surrender of the various orders the king had conferred upon him. Accompanying this letter was a *lettre-de-cachet* banishing the cardinal within three days to his abbey of the Chaise-Dieu, in the midst of the Auvergne mountains, where the king sarcastically intimated he would not be

* "Memoirs of Marie-Antoinette," by Madame Campan, vol. ii. p. 23.

† Ibid. vol. ii. p. 291.

likely to receive much company. Until his departure he was commanded to see no one, except his relatives and counsel. If nothing else can be done, a stop can, at any rate, be put to receptions and ovations at the Palais-Cardinal.

When, in accordance with the above instructions, the Baron de Breteuil presented himself to the Prince de Rohan, on the morning after his release from the Bastille, the latter, who had just ordered his carriage, intending to go round and thank his judges, informed the minister that he would observe two of the orders of the king with the fidelity, the exactitude, and the submission which the Rohans had always shown for the sovereign's commands; but, with regard to his resignation of the office of grand almoner, he could not confide this to M. de Breteuil, as he had had the honour of sending it to the king an hour ago through the Count de Vergennes.* The minister pressed the prince to sign some further paper in reference to this resignation, observing that he did so with regret, but was obliged to obey the orders of the king, his master. "Monsieur," replied the cardinal, in a nettled tone, "the king himself has already done justice on me. I have no need of an executioner." This *mot* speedily

* "Compte rendu de ce qui s'est passé au Parlement," etc., p. 157.

circulated all over Paris, and the minister was henceforth styled "Bourreau (executioner) Breteuil."* Louis XVI.'s minister of justice experienced a more severe rebuff when charged, a few years later, with carrying out the terms of a *lettre-de-cachet* banishing the Duke d'Orléans to his château of Villers-Cotterets for his famous protest at the "royal session," when, as Carlyle remarks, he "cut his court moorings." The baron wished to accompany the duke in his carriage, in order that, in accordance with the king's commands, he might not lose sight of him, whereupon the duke observed, with disdainful pride, "Ah, well! jump up behind."

On June 2, the day after Cagliostro's release from the Bastille, police-inspector Brugnières entered his apartment, and addressed him "in the king's name," at which ominous words his heart, he says, sank within him. The order of which Brugnières was the bearer was dated on the day preceding, and enjoined the count to leave Paris in three days, and the kingdom within three weeks. Next day Cagliostro removed to Passy, and some few days after to St. Denis, whence he started with his wife to Boulogne-sur-Mer. On the 16th they embarked for England under circumstances the most

* "Journals and Correspondence of Lord Auckland," vol. i. p. 126.

sentimental, if we can credit the count's narrative of the affair. "The shores that I quitted," observes he, "were lined by a crowd of citizens of all classes, who blessed and thanked me for the good I had done their brethren, addressing to me the most touching farewells. The winds carried me far away from them, and I heard them no more, but I saw them again on their knees, with their hands raised towards heaven, and it was my turn to bless them, and to cry out and repeat, as though they could hear me: 'Adieu, Frenchmen! adieu, my children! adieu, my country!'"*

The Countess de la Motte remained for three weeks in the Conciergerie ignorant of the true nature of her sentence, and hoping, whatever it might be, that it would not be carried out. "At length," she tells us, "the twenty-first of June arrived, that eventful day which will live in my remembrance as long as memory itself shall live—that day the most accursed in the calendar of my misfortunes.

"One of the gaolers came to my chamber, and told me that he had come from my counsel M. Doillot, 'who,' said the deceiver, 'is now in the *greffe*, (the record office,) and desires to see you, as he is going immediately into the country, which is the reason why

* "Memorial for the Count de Cagliostro."

he comes so early in the morning. It is to read you a letter which he has received from Versailles. It will be unnecessary for you to regard your dress, because he is in so great a hurry.' I threw on hastily a morning gown, and followed this impostor, who made me descend a small staircase which I used to pass every morning to go to the lodge of the *concierge*. He went before me, and entered first. I pushed the door from me to get through, which I had scarce half effected when I found the door forcibly pushed to by a person on the other side with as much violence as if he wished to secure an ox, whom he was fearful would escape. Some one immediately seized me by the right arm, and dragged me into the *greffe*, where another laid hold of my other arm, and bound me fast. The first thing I observed was the *huissier* Breton holding some papers in his hand, which I conceived, as the *concierge* had told me, would be read, announcing my pretended banishment. 'No, certainly,' said I to Breton, 'I will not endure to hear so unjust a sentence, nor fall upon my knees to receive the condemnation of an iniquitous cabal, predetermined to sacrifice me!' A great number of strange persons were present, many of whom seized me rudely round the waist, and others by the legs to oblige me to kneel down, but not being able to succeed they held me suspended at a distance from the

ground. While I was in this posture the *huissier* read my sentence, but the cries I uttered almost drowned his voice.

"Overpowered by superior strength my resistance became more feeble, and in this condition I was dragged to the place where the sacrifice was to be completed. Weary and faint, exhausted by my cries and the ineffectual struggles I had already made, entreating those around me to avenge the innocent and *the blood of their good King Henry II.!* I at length lost all sense of reason. I could see nothing, could feel nothing which could serve to show me what they intended to do."*

We will supplement Madame de la Motte's own account of the infliction of the sentence passed upon her, by some extracts from contemporary memoirs which furnish several curious additional particulars.

"Madame de la Motte," writes the Hon. Mr. Eden to Mr. Pitt, "was called up at five, and informed that the Court wished to see her. She had no suspicion of the judgment, which is not communicated here to the accused, except in the case of a capital sentence. She went in an undress, without stays, which proved convenient. Upon the registrar reading the sentence, her surprise, rage, and shrieks were beyond description.

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. pp. 139—142.

The *bourreau* (executioner) and his assistants instantly seized her, and carried her into an outer court, where she was fastened to a cart with a halter round her neck. The *bourreau* talked to her like a tooth-drawer, and assured her most politely that it would soon be over. The whipping was slight and *pro formâ*, but the branding was done with some severity. It is a good idea that the 'V' (*voleuse*—thief) on her shoulders stands also for Valois."*

Nougaret, author of the "Anecdotes of the reign of Louis XVI.," says, that "on the countess being conducted before her judges, the registrar proceeded to read her sentence; on hearing which, astonishment, fury, rage, and despair seemed all of a sudden to take possession of her. Determined not to hear her sentence to the end, she flung herself on the ground and rolled about like a person convulsed, giving vent to the most horrible yells. The executioner and his assistants had the greatest difficulty in removing her to the court of the palace, where her sentence was to be inflicted. Immediately she perceived the instruments of punish-

* "Journals and Correspondence of Lord Auckland," vol. i. p. 132. A wit of the time observed, in allusion to the countess's descent from an illegitimate branch of the Valois, "that she ought not to have been marked on the left shoulder, as it was on this side that she hung on to the Bourbons."—See "Correspondance, Secrète Inédite sur Louis XVI., Marie-Antoinette," etc., vol. ii. p. 52.

ment, she seized one of the executioners by the collar, and in a moment of frenzy bit a piece out of his hand, then sunk on the ground in convulsions far more violent than those she had recently recovered from. It was found necessary to tear her clothes off from her to mark her with the red-hot iron on her shoulders. During this operation, her cries and imprecations were redoubled. A few hours afterwards there circulated all over Paris the following epigram on the countess's pretensions to the honours of the house of Valois." The *fleur-de-lis*, it should be remembered, invariably formed part of any mark with which culprits were branded:

"À la moderne Valois
Qui contestera ses droits?
La cour des pairs elle-même,
Quoi qu'en termes peu polis,
Lui fait par arrêt suprême,
Endosser les fleurs-de-lis."*

Louis Blanc, in his "History of the French Revolution," quoting mainly the Baron de Besenval and the Abbé Georgel, says: "Tied with cords, and dragged into the court of the Palais, she commenced to utter cries, not of terror, but of fury. Addressing herself to the people, she exclaimed, 'If they treat thus the blood of the Valois, what is the lot reserved for that of the

* "Anecdotes du règne de Louis XVI." vol. i. p. 415, *et seq.*

Bourbons?' And in the midst of the groans which indignation drew from the crowd, these characteristic words were heard:—'It is my own fault that I suffer this ignominy; I had only to say one word, and I should have been hung.' [She not only said this word, but launched forth a succession of impure and calumnious charges against the queen, couched, too, in the foulest language.] Then like as was done to Lally Tollendal, they placed a gag in her mouth, and as she was struggling with despair in the hands of the executioner, the red-hot iron, which ought to have marked her on the shoulder, glanced off and marked her on the breast."

Rétaux de Villette asserts that "people were posted in the court of the palace to make a great noise, so that none of the public who chanced to be present might hear what Madame de la Motte said. The sentence executed, she was thrown half dead into a *fiacre*, and driven at full gallop to the Salpêtrière,"* the prison where abandoned women were confined. One of the doors of the vehicle having flown open on the road, the officers in charge of the countess were only just in time to save her from springing out and throwing herself under the wheels. When she arrived at the Salpêtrière,

* "Mémoire Historique des Intrigues de la Cour," etc., par Rétaux de Villette, p. 69.

she made a further attempt to destroy herself by forcing the coverlid of her miserable truckle bed into her mouth.*

On the day the Countess de Valois de la Motte underwent the infliction of the first portion of her sentence, Louis XVI. set out on a royal progress to Cherbourg, to be present at the submerging of the first cone for the foundation of the gigantic breakwater there. As this was being slowly lowered into the sea amidst shouts of *Vive le Roi!* from thousands of lusty Norman throats, we may be quite certain that the king troubled himself but little as to "what was in reserve for the blood of the Bourbons."

* "Mémoires du Baron de Besenval," vol. iii. p. 140.

XXXV.

Aug. 1785—June 1786.

COUNT DE LA MOTTE'S FLIGHT.—COLD STEEL AND POISON.

We must now go back a little in our narrative and see what has become of Count de la Motte since his flight from Bar-sur-Aube. Beugnot mentions that he took his place in the diligence, but he seems to have gone in one of his own carriages, and posted as fast as he could, day and night, to Boulogne, where he arrived on the night of August 20, having accomplished the journey of three hundred miles, all stoppages included, in little more than forty-eight hours, and whence at noon on the 22nd he crossed over to England.* The authorities, who had shown such remissness in not having him arrested earlier, now that he was beyond their reach began to bestir themselves, and sent orders to the officers of marshalsea, at Boulogne and other

* "Mémoires Justificatifs de la Comtesse de la Motte," p. 134.

ports, to overhaul all vessels leaving the harbour, and capture the count if they only got the chance. The officer of marshalsea at Boulogne was lucky enough to capture the count's carriage, which he had left behind him at the "Hôtel du Lion d'argent," and in his simplicity set a man to watch it, for we know not how many days and nights, in the vain hope that the count would return and claim it,* which we need hardly say he had not the remotest intention of doing.

Of the various dangers and mishaps which befel the count on this, his second visit to England, full particulars are to be found in the narrative which he himself has written of his adventures. He started, he tells us, with merely a hundred louis in his purse, and made with all speed for England, where, on the occasion of his former trip, he had left some diamonds, "which it was natural," he observes, "he should procure." His first call, therefore, was on Gray the jeweller; from whom he obtained the diamonds in question, and ere long was living on the proceeds arising from their sale. While waiting for intelligence as to the turn affairs were taking in Paris, he tells us that he visited the Haymarket Theatre one evening, and that while returning home in a hackney coach a daring attempt was

* Autograph letter from officer of marshalsea at Boulogne to the Baron de Breteuil, in the collection of M. Feuillet de Conches.

made to assassinate him. His hat fortunately saved his skull. A sword was now thrust through the little window behind, and nearly spitted him to his seat. However, he seems to have escaped without bodily injury.

Under the pretence that his life was not safe in London, the count takes a journey to the north. Whether his life were really in danger it is impossible to say, but it is quite certain that his liberty was; for there were serious thoughts at this time of kidnapping him and carrying him over to France. The proposal emanated from a spy in the pay of the French government named Le Mercier. "If," reports he, "in order to carry the individual off, cunning should not suffice, we will employ force to conduct him to some isolated spot on the banks of the Thames, where we will take care to have stationed for a fortnight previously, if necessary, one of those vessels which bring coal to London from the north. Their hulls are so thick, that it would be impossible for any one confined in the hold to make himself heard, let him cry out as loud as he will."*

Before this suggestion of the spy Le Mercier could be acted upon, Count de la Motte had taken up his

* Report dated September, 1785, in the archives of the French Police, quoted by Louis Blanc in his "History of the French Revolution." Bruxelles, vol. ii. p. 129.

quarters in Lancaster, whence he went to Dublin, next to Glasgow, and finally to Edinburgh. Here, he says, he made the discovery that an attempt had been made to poison him, as he believed, at some Dublin dinner-party. At any rate, he was so ill that he was obliged to keep his bed for three months. On his ecovery he found that he was watched whenever he went abroad, which was likely enough to have been the case, as at this time Count d'Adhémar, ambassador of France in England, wrote, it is said, to a great personage at the French court, stating that Count de la Motte had withdrawn among the mountains of Scotland, where the so-called privileges of the Scotch prevented any legal seizure of his person being made; nevertheless he, the ambassador, had found ten well-disposed hardy mountaineers who would undertake to capture the count and carry him over to France, for which service, as they would probably have to employ as much force as seduction in the accomplishment of it, and incur the risk of being hung, they demanded a thousand louis each. The queen, having heard of this letter, at once said that even if it were necessary to give double this amount, there ought not to be a moment's hesitation, since the presence of the Count de la Motte was the one thing wanting to thoroughly unveil a most abominable conspiracy and to punish

the authors of it. Orders were thereupon given to place the requisite sum at the ambassador's disposal.* By this time, however, the count had left Edinburgh, and gone south to Newcastle-on-Tyne, where, he pretends, the capuchin, McDermott, whose acquaintance he made when last in England, bribed by the handsome offer of ten thousand pounds, attempted to poison him on several occasions.† We do not believe a word of this; the French government were no doubt anxious to secure the count's presence at the approaching trial, and would have been only too glad of a chance of kidnapping him; but that they, or indeed anyone else, wished to put him out of the way, is extremely improbable, for it was his evidence, and not his silence, that they desired to ensure.

About this time, namely, early in April, 1786, a woman named Costa, wife of one of the ambassador's spies, who had succeeded in scraping acquaintance with Count de la Motte, crossed over to Paris with a letter from the count to M. Doillot, Madame de la Motte's counsel, in which he stated that he could make the innocence of his wife clear as day if he only dared come

* "Compte rendu de ce qui s'est passé au Parlement," etc., pp. 65, 66.

† "Mémoires Justificatifs de la Comtesse de la Motte," pp. 103, *et seq.*

forward. The count insinuated that he had a letter of the cardinal's, inquiring of him whether he had succeeded in disposing of the diamonds.* On the woman Costa's return to England she went, according to her own account, by direction of the Paris police to Count d'Adhémar, who bade her tell her husband to take a house at Newcastle-on-Tyne, so as to facilitate the drugging of the count and conveying him on board a French ship which was lying ready in the harbour under the command of one Surbois, an *exempt* of the French police. Madame Costa asserted that her husband had already received a bribe of a thousand guineas for this purpose (less a commission of sixty guineas which the ambassador's secretary deducted for his little pickings out of the affair), and had been promised nine thousand guineas more when the count was safe on board.† Costa, however, seems to have let the count into the secret, and they came up to London together to work upon the ambassadorial exchequer as best they could.

Arrived there on the 18th of May, Count de la Motte tells us that shortly afterwards he meets the French ambassador at Lady Spencer's, and proceeds

* "Correspondance Secrète Inédite sur Louis XVI., Marie-Antoinette," etc., vol. ii. p. 33.

† "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. p. 203-4.

to draw him out. From what the ambassador lets fall, the count comes to the conclusion that the government now wish to get him out of the way simply to ensure his silence. "Your presence and deposition," remarks the ambassador, "would entirely overthrow all that has hitherto been done, and the business would take quite a different turn." He tells the count that, according to the advice of the Duke of Rutland, they could have seized him when he was at Dublin. They thought, however, they had sufficient evidence to convict the cardinal without his testimony. Next day the ambassador observes to him: "It was feared that you would have espoused the cardinal's cause in preference to that of the queen. You know your position: the De Rohans accuse you of having run away with the remainder of the Necklace." He then suggests that the count, by surrendering himself can do himself no harm, and might do the queen some service, and undertakes to procure him a passport in eight or ten days at the farthest. De la Motte of course wants money, or, at any rate, hints that he does, and D'Adhémar promises him five or six thousand livres. It is then arranged between them what the count is to say in his defence. He is on no account to state that the countess had access to the queen; neither is he to mention anything about the letters said to have been sent by the queen to the

cardinal. De la Motte, playing with the ambassador like a cat does with a mouse, does not see how he can acquit the queen; whereupon the ambassador glides off to the cardinal, tells the count to repeat all the indecent speeches he has heard him make respecting her majesty, who will not be displeased at his so doing. He next advises him to say nothing about De Polignac, Coigny, Vandreuil, Dillon, or Fersen—all belonging to the queen's society. "As to the Necklace," continues D'Adhémar, "I would advise you to say that you are persuaded the cardinal gave it, partly or wholly, to your wife. The countess will never allow that to be the case, but I am certain it really was so. Finally, you must not say a single word respecting the Baron de Breteuil." The count suggests giving up the countess's necklace which Gray had set, and which by this time must certainly have been in pawn, if not sold outright. This, D'Adhémar says, would certainly please the king. Then advising the count to change his name, and to avoid the tattling of the *Courier de l'Europe*, the ambassador brings the interview to a close.

Other interviews follow; the count no doubt bleeding the ambassador from time to time pretty freely. Although he talked enough about surrendering himself, it is tolerably certain he had no intention of running that risk. Vergennes, moreover, believing that the

count's presence might damage the cardinal's cause, received the proposition with coldness, and did not send the required passport. D'Adhémar on one occasion showed Count de la Motte the draft of a letter which he had sent to the king through the Count de Vergennes, wherein he informed his majesty that the count desired to surrender himself and justify the proceedings of his wife. "I have, however, been tricked and betrayed by Vergennes," he remarked, "who kept back the letter until it was too late, for judgment has now been pronounced." D'Adhémar tells the count that his presence in Paris is now more necessary than ever. "The procureur-général is going to prefer a fresh complaint against the cardinal for 'criminal attempts' upon the queen, for the language he has used, the letters he has exhibited, the pretended meetings by night, &c., and the parliament will be by statute obliged to try the Necklace affair over again in connection with the new charge." On leaving the ambassador, the count hastened to a neighbouring coffee-house, where he sees a copy of the judgment to which M. d'Adhémar had just referred, in the *Morning Post* newspaper, and at once writes a savage letter to M. de Vergennes, copies of which he sends to the English and French press.

A few days afterwards, the ambassador's secretary tells the count that the queen has determined to abandon

the new prosecution, on account of the scandal it would create, but will contrive to deprive the cardinal of his blue ribbon and places at court, and banish him to herd with monks in the savage parts of Auvergne. At this news, which indicates a stoppage of further supplies, Count de la Motte is inconsolable, and feels, moreover, that he has been duped. To let him down as gently as possible, the court protection is promised him. For the future, however, the ambassador is "not at home" to the count's morning calls; neither does he take any notice whatever of the count's numerous letters.*

The count, now grown indignant, threatens all manner of exposures, and with his letters to the newspapers becomes a complete nuisance to the representatives of the French government in England; the ambassador, however, escapes further persecution, for just at this moment he is summoned to Paris by his government, who, after a time, relieve him of his diplomatic functions, and appoint the Marquis de la Luzerne, brother of the old Bishop of Langres, in his stead.

* "Mémoires Justificatifs de la Comtesse de la Motte," pp. 152, *et seq.*

XXXVI.

1786. JUNE—DEC.

THE SALPÊTRIÈRE.—TRUCKLE-BED AND PRISON FARE.—THE COUNT THREATENS THE FRENCH COURT.

"As soon as Madame de la Motte arrived at the Salpêtrière," remarks Madame Robin, the then superior general of the hospital, "she was taken to the bureau, where all our prisoners are enrolled before they are sent to their several prisons: she remained near three quarters of an hour apparently without any knowledge of what passed—totally insensible. A little after she came to herself, I begged her to search her pockets and let me take her earrings. She presented to me her right ear; she could not speak, and she was so disfigured that her shape scarce appeared to be human, yet she seemed patient as a lamb going to the fold. The *huissiers* then crammed her into the same hackney-coach, and conveyed her to the hall of the Salpêtrière.

Before she entered the prison itself, she was taken extremely ill, and we thought she would never recover.

"We seized the first moment when she appeared to be recovering, and caused her to be placed by some of the sisters in a bed one of the prisoners had given her, which was fortunate for Madame de la Motte, otherwise she would have been under the necessity of lying in a bed full of vermin with six of the poor old women."

"The next day," says Madame de la Motte, "a number of girls, habited in the dress of daughters of charity, came to visit me in crowds; they appeared and disappeared like lightning. The officiating sister, Geneviève, whom I shall never forget, conducted me to a small court to take the air, and left me to return to her business. I was scarcely seated when I saw a very great number of poor women coming out of a gate into this same court, making a most dreadful clattering with their wooden shoes. As soon as they saw me they exclaimed, 'Oh! there she is; there is the lady in the court.' These poor creatures, whose appearance spoke a variety of wretchedness, approached and invited me to see the place destined for my reception. Some of these women took me by the arm and led me to what they called the dormitory, the place where they slept and where they worked. I had no sooner entered the door of this infernal mansion, than I recoiled with

terror, but there were many women behind, who prevented me from running back, otherwise I should have fallen, so great was my horror at sight of this hall, containing one hundred and twenty-seven women, whose wretchedness may more easily be imagined than described. I shrunk back at the sight of this hideous spectacle, while big tears rolled down my cheeks, and with a voice stifled by the effect of grief, I said, like a child insensible to what passed around me, 'Poor Valois! oh, poor Valois!'

"It will be extremely difficult for me to paint the horrors of this dreadful mansion; every effort is inadequate to give with sufficient strength of colouring the interior description of this house of misery and its wretched inhabitants. One would have imagined from their conduct and behaviour that these women had been reared in the forests, for they were almost as wild and savage as tigers, having always in their hands either stones, bottles, or chairs, ready to throw at the head of any one that displeased them. Every day teemed with new squabbles, and they frequently fought, and would sometimes beat one another almost to death. This prison was moreover a seminary of vice and depravity even too shocking to mention, and, instead of a house for the salutary correction of their souls, may more justly be denominated the place of their destruction.

"I will attempt to give a description of this abode of horrors. The entry is by a small court about twenty feet broad and forty-four in length. Opposite the entrance doors are seven dark cabins under a gallery built upon pilasters. These cabins, or rather dungeons, are in general between five and six feet long and four and a half broad; in each there is a straw bed, a mattress, without any furniture, not so much as a chair. Those women who come thither, and have money, may purchase these cabins of the old prisoners. In each of these cabins is a window about a foot and a half square, with no glass, but very thick wooden shutters, fastened with massive iron bolts. Below these shutters is another small opening to let the air into these cabins. At the bottom of this court, to the right, are four stone steps, after which is a little passage which divides the great dormitory from the little court. On the right is a small court leading to the great one, to serve as a walk for one hundred and twenty-seven females, eighty feet long and near sixty wide: the walls about sixty-two feet high. Opposite the entrance gate of the court leading to the dormitory is a chamber for one sister, to which there is an ascent of five steps.

"Facing the little court is the gate of the dormitory, which is very low. This dormitory is sixty feet long and thirteen broad: the ceiling fortified with large

strong joists; the wall strengthened in the same manner. In this dormitory are six beds about five feet in length, composed also of a truss of straw, a mattress, and two coarse cloth coverings. Round the beds are benches and some chairs. The right side of the window is filled with women at work, who have purchased these places, as I also paid for mine, for I had been obliged to sit down on the ground in the court, all the places, forty in number, being occupied. The walls are entirely surrounded with thick shelves, on which the women put their victuals. Beneath this dormitory is another, the half of which is below ground, where there are three or four beds in a better air than the others. Upon the right is a corridor, three feet broad and about seventy-five feet long, in which there are thirteen cabins much the same as those of which I have before spoken, with low unglazed windows and iron bars, so that the miserable inhabitants have no defence from the inclemency of the seasons, but the rain, wind, hail, and snow beat in upon the cabins. By mounting upon the window sills you may see even to the fourth court, which is called the Court Sainte-Claire, where there are always a great number of people. Facing the dormitory is a small staircase conducting to a particular little court which leads into a square opposite to the chapel of this same prison. On the right is the cell of the superior

sister, Martha. Going out on the right you come to a court leading to the kitchen, where are three doors to enter the Salpêtrière, on both sides of which there are turnkeys. As you come out from the Salpêtrière there are seven courts, and in every court a great number of turnkeys. On the left, opposite the entrance passage by the Court Sainte-Claire, are two porticos, leading to the three gates of the Salpêtrière. There are in all nine courts to pass before you can leave the hospital.

"The inhabitants of this den have an old petticoat for clothing, and a gown of coarse grey cloth, stockings of the same kind, a coarse shift, a pair of wooden shoes, and a cap. Every woman is allowed thrice a week three ounces of boiled beef, on the other days about two penuyworth of cheese, with fat broth, and five pounds of bread each day. Such is the regulation allowance for the sustenance of these wretches. Women, who before have scarce ever had a needle in their hands, are here taught to work in a short time. Some are taught to stitch wristbands, others to make shirts and all kinds of plain work; their labours are, however, of no advantage to them."*

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. p. 143, *et seq.* The Salpêtrière at the present day is a refuge for aged and infirm women, and accommodates no less than 4369 occupants. Madame de la Motte's cell is one of the lions of the place shown to visitors.

Whilst the countess is doing dreary penance in the Salpêtrière, and the count, her husband, is haunting the London "hells," waiting the return of the French ambassador from Paris, to know whether it was intended to do *him* what he styles "justice," a paragraph, no doubt instigated by the count himself, appears in some of the London newspapers, reproaching him for his timidity in not publishing a certain justificatory memoir which had been talked about for some time past. Indeed, so notorious had the matter become, that the Duke of Dorset writes to Mr. Eden (afterwards Lord Auckland), special envoy at the French court, under date December 7, 1786—a week before the appearance of the paragraph in question—informing him that the Count de la Motte was about to publish a memoir in England respecting the Necklace affair, which, as it would be certain to contain nothing but falsehoods and calumny, he advises the French government to get answered immediately on its appearance by some clever fellow, and suggests the editor of the *Courier de l'Europe*, who is understood to be in their pay, as a likely sort of person for the task.*

The count, who is getting rather fond of using his pen, finding it a convenient weapon wherewith to in-

* "Journals and Correspondence of Lord Auckland," vol. i. p. 297.

sinuate his threats, addresses a long letter to the papers in reply to the aforesaid paragraph, and stating in explicit terms what he intends to do if this "justice," for which he is so anxious, is not speedily done him. It did not, perhaps, occur to the count that the only justice he was entitled to demand was that already meted out to him by the highest legal tribunal in his country, namely, the Court of Parliament, which had sentenced him to the scourge, the branding-iron, and the galleys. This letter of the count's we subjoin:

"To the Printer of the *Morning Chronicle.*

"Sir,

"In consequence of a letter inserted in your print of the 13th instant, I think myself called upon to interrupt a silence which I meant to keep till the return of Comte d'Adhémar; but such a conduct, in the actual state of affairs, would only serve to give weight and add importance to the groundless reproaches of timidity and indifference laid to my charge. It is incumbent on me, in this answer to your correspondent, first to account for the motives that have hitherto engaged me to silence, and then to give a slight idea of the memorial I propose to lay before the public for my justification.

"I arrived in London on the 18th of last May, and

have never since moved from this capital. At that period—previous, as it appears from the above date, to the conclusion of the famous process—I had frequent interviews with the French ambassador. My memorial will contain a circumstantial detail of what passed between us at each appointment. From the line of conduct which his excellency struck out for me, as well with respect to M. de Vergennes as to my comportment before the Parliament of Paris, and from the secret motives imparted to me of the various attempts of taking me forcibly away, it will self-evidently appear that the ambassador looked upon my departure not only as certain, but that my presence, earnestly desired, and zealously solicited by the most illustrious personages (whose names I shall mention), would undoubtedly delay the sentence, and make the whole affair wear a different aspect. What was the result? The very personages alluded to, like Comte d'Adhémar, were imposed upon by a minister who, in appearance, and for form sake, feigned to second their endeavours, but who in reality overturned the structure, and brought it to the ground by his wily manœuvres, and contributed alone to extricate the cardinal from the disagreeable situation in which he was implicated. May a complete disgrace reward the former for his officiousness! This is my ardent wish, and his enemies will not fail to

accelerate it by their reiterated solicitations. But I resume the thread of my subject.

"Notwithstanding all the instructions he had received, the ambassador could not, no more than myself, foresee a sentence such as has been awarded. He was the first to acquaint me with it, and at the same time hinted at plans which could not but turn greatly to my advantage, since they tended to give me an opportunity (which was the first wish of my heart, and for the obtaining of which I exerted every nerve) of appearing before the Parliament, and entering upon my justification. His excellency further assured me, that I should meet with powerful friends, whose patronage would counterpoise all the credit and combined efforts of the house of Rohan.

"As those projects were never called into execution, and as the supreme power, apprehensive of a minute explanation, pronounced the cardinal's fate, I thought it expedient, considering the promises made to me, to wait the ambassador's arrival, no ways doubting but that, in consequence of his account of my conduct throughout the whole business, some regard would be paid to it, and justice done me. But if the answer I expect from his excellency be not satisfactory—if my just demand be not acceded to, then I shall look upon myself as free to act, and demonstrate by a detail,

equally true and well supported, by letters which I fortunately have in my possession, and which will corroborate my assertion, why Mademoiselle d'Oliva was chosen by me to play a part for half an hour, not on the terrace, as was purposely given out, but in the interior of the garden of Versailles. The world shall be informed of the grand object of this rehearsal, as well as the catastrophe projected for the first night's representation, which, by-the-by, did not take place, on account of the principal performer having been warned, not indeed of all the snares laid to entrap him, but secretly put on his guard, not to expose himself imprudently in places where he was liable to be surprised by his enemies, who would snatch at every opportunity to effect his ruin. It will appear that, in consequence of this caution, it was thought desirable to alter the plan, that it gave rise to the purchasing of the Necklace (for which I shall account in the clearest manner *by making special mention of its real owner*, who made my wife a present of some of the most brilliant diamonds, which I sold in London as my property), and kept by much the more considerable part, which may be worn in different manners, without ever being known by the jewellers; and why? By the concatenation of those circumstances, which happened pending the process, my wife and I were abandoned and inhumanly sacri-

ficed. These illustrations will convince the public that certain caricature print-makers whom I know, and consequently despise, aimed at deceiving the judgment, and prepossessing them against me, by putting in my hand a Necklace, of which I had a very small share.

"That the readers may have nothing to wish for, and in order to point out to them the causes of so tardy a revenge (which was hatching without success, ever since the death of Louis XV.), I begin my account at the era of the cardinal's embassy at Vienna, and trace every event that has taken place till the final decision of the famous affair.

"I am not to be told that my memorial, if published, will, by the secret and curious anecdotes it contains, raise against me a host of powerful foes, who will not fail to seek for, and meet with, sufficient opportunity to wreak their vengeance on me. But what of that? My intentions shall be fulfilled; and, whatever be my fate, I shall have the comfort of having left behind me an authentic justification, and of having unveiled the whole of the intrigue. And who knows but I may be fortunate enough to hear one day or other, for the good of my country, that my memorial has opened the eyes of him who has been kept so long in the dark! But for that I shall be told the memorial must not

reach him, and all the avenues will be strongly beset. I am aware of it. But on the other hand, I shall observe that there exists a powerful party, whose interests it is to forward it, who have been long employed in working a mine, which only waits a favourable opportunity for explosion. To hasten this, if my memorial has, as it were, the effects of a match, I shall look upon all the misfortunes I have encountered as the path leading directly to that event, and shall think myself sufficiently rewarded for the injuries and persecutions I have experienced.

"After this declaration, sir, I trust I shall be no longer reproached with a timidity unknown to me; and that, considering the infamous manner in which I have been treated, no one will blame my just resentment.

"I am, very sincerely, Sir,

"Your very humble servant,

"No. 10, Charlotte Street, "COUNT DE LA MOTTE.
"Rathbone Place." *

That this letter may not fail in its effect, it is again published in the same newspaper, two days afterwards, *in the original French.* One can well conceive that the mail-bags that day carried a good number of copies of the journal in question to the French capital, and there

* *Morning Chronicle* newspaper, December 29, 1786.

can hardly be a doubt but that, coupled with the letter which the Duke of Dorset had addressed to the English ambassador at the court of Versailles, and which had been communicated to the French government, it created considerable consternation among the party of the queen.

XXXVII.

DEC., 1786—JUNE, 1787.

MYSTERIOUS HINTS GIVEN TO THE COUNTESS TO EFFECT HER ESCAPE.—SHE RESOLVES ON ATTEMPTING IT.

IT must have been about this time that hints were given to Madame de la Motte with reference to attempting to escape from her confinement. Her own version of the manner in which these hints were given is like most of her statements about herself, strongly tinged with the romantic; still it is tolerably certain that hints of some kind or another were given to her. She fixes the date when these overtures commenced not later than the beginning of December, 1786; but considering that she deferred her attempt to escape until July of the following year, we should be inclined to fix it at some later period, and certainly subsequent to the time when the French court were made acquainted with the letters above referred to. However, we will let her tell the story in her own words:

"It was about the latter end of November or the commencement of December, 1786, that one of the soldiers, doing duty as sentinel in the court of the Salpêtrière, to see that the women made no holes in the dormitory to escape by the aqueducts, passed the end of his musket through a broken part of the wall and attempted to touch Angelica, who waited upon me as a servant, and who was sentenced to be confined for life in the Salpêtrière. 'What do you want with me?' asked Angelica. 'Is not your name Angelica?' said he, softly; 'are you not the person who waits upon Madame de la Motte?' 'Yes,' replied she. 'Very well,' said he; 'I heard many lords and ladies yesterday, in the Palais Royal, mention your name as being the person who is so attentive to her. Tell me if you want anything. I always carry about me an inkstand, paper, &c., which I will furnish you with, as I know you have not permission to write. Prepare your letters, if you wish to write to anybody, and I will take charge of them.'

"Angelica thanked him for his kindness, but frankly confessed she could neither read nor write.

"'No matter,' replied he, 'there is your mistress, Madame de la Motte; I would advise you to get her to write for you to the different ladies who come here, and beg her to recommend you to their goodness.'

"Two days after this, about three in the morning, the

same soldier again touched Angelica with his musket, and gave her a packet of gilt paper, a large bundle of quills, a bottle of ink, and a letter for herself. 'Madame de la Motte will read it to you,' said he. Next day Angelica brought me the letter, at every line of which I was struck with such astonishment that I could scarce believe my eyes. This mysterious letter was as follows:

"'Assure yourself, Mademoiselle Angelica, that I shall be extremely happy if I can be instrumental in procuring your liberty. Command me, and believe that I shall seize every opportunity of being useful to you [and, immediately preceding the last line,] 'UNFORTUNATE, put this letter before the light—'T IS UNDERSTOOD —be sure to be discreet.'

"After having read to Angelica so much of this letter as concerned her, I made use of some pretext to send her to the dormitory, and the moment I was alone put the letter to the light, when writing began to appear as if by the power of magic. At length all was visible, and the following words astonished my eyes:

"'You are earnestly exhorted to keep up your spirits, and to take proper nourishment, that you may have sufficient strength to support the fatigue of your journey. PEOPLE are now intent upon changing your condition. Speak your wishes, and mention the day you are willing to depart, that a post-chaise may be prepared, which

you will find at the corner of the King's garden. Be discreet; 'tis your interest to be so. Confide implicitly in the bearer, without entertaining the smallest suspicion.'

"Judge of my astonishment on perusing this mysterious paper! Surely, said I to myself, I am awake, and in sober certainty of the truth of what I see. But who can be the persons who have thus interested themselves in my misfortunes? This singular expression, 'It is understood,' was never used by any person but myself, the cardinal, and the queen. Perhaps they both, repenting of what they have done, ashamed of having the weakness to suffer me to be sacrificed, at this moment wish to give me liberty."

To this letter Madame de la Motte tells us she wrote an answer to the effect that she was anxious to escape from her confinement, and begged her unknown correspondent to aid her in the attempt. In due course, she received the following reply:

"PEOPLE have reflected; endeavour to procure the model of the key that will open easily that side where you wish to go out. Do for the best, and compose yourself."

"For two months," she says, "I laboured at the attempt, and at length succeeded in making two designs—one small and the other large—in which I thought I had fortunately delineated the wards of the key, and which, the moment I perceived to be perfect,

I enclosed in a letter, which I gave to Angelica to convey to the soldier, who, about a fortnight afterwards, brought a key made exactly after the paper model. I had the patience to wait two whole days without sufficient resolution to make the experiment; but on Sunday, between six and seven in the morning, when Angelica and myself were together in the gallery, the opportunity seeming favourable, with a trembling hand and palpitating heart I applied the key to the lock, when, gracious heaven! what was my surprise and joy at finding the door open! We both endeavoured as much as possible to conceal our emotions, and proceeded to try whether this same key would open the other three doors. In the afternoon of the same day I pulled off my shoes and crept softly along to the second door, which, to my great joy, was also obsequious to my touch. I shut it again, ascended the steps softly by three at a time, all in a tremble for fear of discovery, found, as I wished, all was fast and everything quiet. I then attempted to open the door on the other side of the gallery near the second dormitory. This I did with wonderful facility, and with as little trouble as I had opened the others."*

Strange to say that although, according to the coun-

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. pp. 143 to 197. We suspect the whole of this key business to be fudge.

tess's own account, she was in possession of the means of escape by the end of February (1787) at the latest, she took no steps to profit by them until three months afterwards, pretending that, in the interim, she had been engaged in using her influence with persons of condition to procure the release of her attendant, Angelica, when all the while she had the means of releasing her in her own possession. However, the girl obtains her pardon, and madame has now leisure to attend to her own affairs.

It was on the 1st of May that Angelica was set at liberty. On the 13th the countess, who has long since found means of carrying on communications with her former friends, sends a letter by the hands of "a young *confidante*," whom she has managed to gain over, to an old lover of hers, the Baron de Crussol, the same who procured Count de la Motte his post in the Count d'Artois' body-guard, and who, with his brother, the Bailli de Crussol, were of the queen's set at Little Trianon. The baron played *Basile* in Beaumarchais' comedy, "The Barber of Seville," at the private theatre there, when Marie-Antoinette performed the part of *Rosina*. This letter, which is all love and tenderness, contains the customary appeal of the De Valois for pecuniary assistance. In the course of it the countess tells the baron that the Duchess de Duras, "*dame du*

palais" to the queen, "a very virtuous and worthy woman," is going to pay her a visit next week, and then follows this characteristic passage: "I shall see her alone; the public must not know of it, as it might get talked about on account of my being forbidden to see any one *for fear I should speak.*"* To return, however, to the countess's narrative. "I reflected within myself," says she, "that if I should run the hazard of going out in the dress of the Salpêtrière, I should be easily discovered in the event of being met by any of the sisters. I conceived also that a male habit would be more favourable for my escape, and communicated this to my unknown correspondent, to whom I wrote:

"'I wish to have a large blue coat, a flannel waistcoat, black breeches, a pair of half boots, a round high-crowned hat, to make me appear taller, a switch, and a pair of leather gloves.'

"All these the guard brought me about ten or twelve days after; he carried the great-coat under his cloak, the waistcoat in his pocket, and the switch in the barrel of his musket; and about two nights after he brought the half boots and a man's shirt. Thus furnished with wings for my flight, I was wholly intent on my game, and, what is not a little singular, without the least fear

* "Lettres et Documents Inédits de Louis XVI. et Marie-Antoinette," par M. Feuillet de Conches, vol. i. p. 171.

of not being able to effect my escape; not one shadow of doubt presented itself to my imagination, nothing gave me the least uneasiness; I felt myself quite confident of success, and I found myself much happier than I had been for a long time. I reflected that I was under the immediate protection of the queen, and would not suffer myself to entertain a doubt that it was the queen herself, and no one else, who had taken this interest in my behalf.

"After a time, however, a feeling of apprehension came across my mind and led me to suspect the sincerity of my unknown correspondent. Surely, I thought to myself, this cannot be a plot concerted to lull me to security that I may afterwards be more easily got rid of. It cannot be so; they really wish to render me service, there can be no doubt of it, since I have the key and the proper dress; but whither will this post-chaise conduct me?—probably to some convent; and does the queen suppose that I can be happy there? I will never consent to go to a convent, and only to some place where I can be free—where I am at liberty.

"About this time I was not a little surprised by a visit from M. de Crosne, lieutenant of police. About six o'clock one afternoon I was conducted to Sister Martha's apartment, where I saw M. de Crosne, with M. Martin, secretary, and another person who was a

stranger. M. de Crosne at first did not know me; he appeared much surprised and affected to find me so reduced, so altered for the worse, and his sensibility deeply affected me. I read in his face, as in a mirror, how different I then was from what I had been when he formerly knew me. Affliction had worn me down almost to a skeleton; my eyes were languid and inanimate. [The countess used to pride herself on the killing effect of her eyes.] I was, as it were, but the fleeting shadow of what I had once been in the days of my prosperity. I stood for some moments unable to articulate a single syllable. At length, awaking from my reverie, I saluted him, when the amiable man kindly inquired if there was anything I was in want of, as if so, he would give the necessary orders.

"At these words I quite lost myself, and forgetting every consideration that should have restrained me, I drew near him, and repeated, 'Want anything? Oh, sir, it is too much to bear—that I should be thus confined!' M. de Crosne greatly affected, would not suffer me to recite the melancholy catalogue of my woes, which I was entering into with all the energy that grief inspired.

"I could not help thinking that M. de Crosne was sent hither expressly to see me, and the more I reflected upon this visit of his, the more suspicious I became. I began to see that they were fearful I should say too

much, and that it was judged expedient rather to endeavour to soothe than drive me to extremities; for if I had really any ill-will, any grudge towards the queen, I thought to myself, neither the Baron de Breteuil nor the lieutenant of police would take the pains to favour me with the slightest attention."*

It should be noted that it was at this period, namely, early in the month of May, that the Duchess de Polignac and her sister-in-law, the Countess Diane, went to England, ostensibly to drink the Bath waters, but really, it is believed, to come to terms with Count de la Motte through the medium of their intimate friend the Duchess of Devonshire.† One may here quote a bit of court gossip contained in a letter dated Versailles, June 27, 1787, and written to Stanislaus Poniatowski, king of Poland, to the effect that, on the occasion of this

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. pp. 205, 212.

† "Journals and Correspondence of Lord Auckland," vol. i. p. 420. There are certain discrepancies with respect to the date of the duchess's visit. Mr. Storer, writing to the Hon. Mr. Eden, on May 11, 1787, says, "the Polignacs have arrived; on Tuesday they went to the opera," &c. In contradiction to this we have a letter written by Marie-Antoinette, and dated April 11, exactly a month previous, evidently addressed to the duchess while she was in England, and inquiring whether she had found any benefit from the Bath waters. It is possible that a wrong date has been affixed to the last-mentioned letter subsequently to its having been written, for Marie-Antoinette left many of her letters undated. See "Lettres et Documents Inédits de Louis XVI. et Marie-Antoinette," vol. i.

visit, the Duchess de Polignac paid Count de la Motte four thousand louis for certain letters said to have been written by the queen. If there is any truth in the story, these were in all probability copies of the letters purporting to have been written by Marie-Antoinette, together with the cardinal's replies, and which were afterwards published in the Appendix to the Countess's Life.* Of this visit of the Duchess de Polignac we shall again have occasion to speak.

At length the countess takes her final resolution, and fixes upon some day between the 8th and the 11th of June, either at eleven o'clock in the morning or six o'clock in the evening, for her escape. The arrangement was this: the guard was to disguise himself as a waggoner, and with a whip in his hand, was to walk round the King's garden (the *Jardin des Plantes*) at the times specified on each of the above-mentioned four days. The attendant who had succeeded Angelica, and whom the countess was obliged to take into her confidence, begged that she might be permitted to accompany her. After some hesitation, the countess gave her consent.

* "Correspondance Secrète Inédite sur Louis XVI., Marie-Antoinette," &c., vol. ii. p. 157.

XXXVIII.

1787. JUNE—JULY.

THE COUNTESS'S ESCAPE.—A LAST VISIT TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF BAR-SUR-AUBE.

ON the morning of the 11th of June, the last of the four appointed days, "Marianne and I, before our departure, took each of us a cup of coffee to revive our spirits and give us courage. I then proceeded to open the doors, three of which I fastened again with my key, and the fourth Marianne drew towards her. Marianne, who knew the house perfectly well, took the shortest turnings she could find, believing that I was following her. I, however, managed to lose sight of her; nevertheless, I did not lose my courage, but passed on until I found myself in a large hall wherein were a great number of small beds. After having cast my eyes round me, I inquired of the sisters the way to the Porte de Champs. I did not well understand the directions they gave me, but, after traversing many courts, found myself at length

in a very spacious court among a number of people who had come to gratify their curiosity with a sight of this prison. I followed a party who entered the chapel to view it, taking care to mix myself up with the rest of the company, and ere long had the gratification of finding myself outside those doors which I had always looked on as impassable. Here I saw no one but the sisters, to whom I gave a piece of money as though I were an ordinary visitor, and at length fortunately reached the Porte de Champs. Here I discovered my good Marianne waiting for me near the river.*

"The King's garden was crowded with people, but I fortunately managed to escape observation, and leaped into the boat to Marianne, who was already there with two strange gentlemen. Fearful of a discovery, I made signs to her not to speak to me. The two gentlemen were seated; but lest my awkwardness in my new habiliments should be discovered, I remained standing. At length we gained the opposite bank, and upon our landing near the arsenal, that hideous place, the Bastille, opposed itself to my view. Marianne conducted me

* It was commonly believed at the time, that the authorities not only connived at the countess's escape, but abetted it. It is said that at the moment of her departure from the Salpêtrière, the superior jokingly said to her, "Farewell, Madame, take great care you are not remarked" (meaning also re-marked with the branding-iron).

through byways and narrow streets until we found a hackney-coach which took us to Charenton. On arriving there we stopped at a bootmaker's to exchange my half boots for a pair of shoes, after which we hired a cabriolet, which conveyed us a distance of seven leagues. We then alighted, and walked till half-past eleven o'clock at night.

"We slept at a village called Maison-Rouge, and at six the next morning pursued our journey on foot till ten in the evening, when we stopped a few hours to repose ourselves. Here I inquired whether I could have a cabriolet. I could not, however, be thus accommodated. We were, therefore, obliged to take a cart, which conducted us about two miles from Provins. About five in the evening we stopped at the first cabaret, and dined, and after dinner, fearful of being suspected by the marshalsea, I despatched Marianne to purchase women's apparel. She returned with a jacket of narrow-striped red cotton, an apron of the same stuff, a petticoat striped blue and white, a pair of leather shoes, such as are worn by peasants, and a pair of very small buckles. We departed from this inn at six the same evening.

"The town of Provins was about sixteen leagues from Paris, but I did not judge it prudent to take the coach from here, there being no other conveyance besides the post, which I wished as much as possible to avoid. We

proceeded towards the back of the town, where we met a great number of officers walking together, one of whom I overheard say: 'Oh! there's a woman in man's clothes.' When they drew nearer they pulled off their hats, and begged permission to accompany me. One of these gentlemen's professions of service were so very profuse that I found it extremely difficult to engage him to desist from following me. 'You are,' said he, 'some young girl but just escaped from a convent, and your lover is certainly near at hand waiting for you in a post-chaise.' 'If such is your opinion, sir,' replied I, 'it is very impolite in you to think of following me, particularly as you have no right to expect that I should confess to you, if you should be right in your conjecture.' At this he withdrew. I turned towards the left, under a hill, and not being able to find a place more retired, we concealed ourselves under a verdant recess, where a brook of water ran down towards the meadow. Here Marianne and I assumed our new disguise, which made us appear exactly like peasants, each of us holding in our arms a little basket of eggs, and a pound of butter neatly covered with a piece of linen, which was bought for that purpose. I threw my former apparel into the brook, putting stones into the coat pockets and the hat, that they might sink more easily, and that no trace of

my flight might be discovered. We went five leagues on foot the same evening, and stopped, about eleven o'clock, at the first house of entertainment in the suburbs of Nogent, which is about two-and-twenty leagues from Paris. Here again I was so much fatigued that, after our supper, poor Marianne was obliged to put me upon her shoulders, and bring me into the cow-house, and lay me on the straw, for there was neither bed nor chamber.

"The day after, about seven, we hired a cart, which conveyed us directly to Troyes, about nine leagues from Nogent, where we slept till four the next morning, when we again pursued our journey on foot. On our road we met a waggoner, who civilly asked us to get up into his cart, a proposal which we readily accepted. He conveyed us to the town where he lived, about two leagues distant, but this honest rustic would receive no money; he would have no other recompense than a promise of marriage, which I was constrained to give him. I told him that I and my cousin Marianne had lived at Chaumont, in Champagne, and gave him a fictitious name and address. On parting with him we were fortunate enough to procure a farmer's cart, which took us to Vendeuvere, where we dined, and about two we set forward again in a covered carriage, which conveyed us seven leagues further. We passed through

Bar-sur-Aube, and at six we were put down at a village about three leagues from there.

"When I arrived at this place I wrote letters to some of my husband's relations, with which I sent Marianne, who could not find many of the persons in whom I confided. She went to seek a friend of Madame de la Tour, sister of M. de la Motte, to whom she sent in my note. This lady immediately knew my writing, and ran to her wardrobe, and gave Marianne petticoats, shifts, handkerchiefs, with half a louis, which was all she had in her pocket, and greatly regretted that she had it not in her power to do more. She then accompanied her to M. de Suremont, M. de la Motte's uncle. This gentleman's wife, after having coldly received Mdlle. Charton, which was this young lady's name, and Marianne, refused to come and see me. M. de Suremont sent Marianne to desire me to meet him half way. A place was appointed, and it was about midnight when we met. The night was extremely dark, and we sat down on the bank of a ditch. M. de Suremont appeared very glad to see me, but expressed his extreme regret that he could not accommodate me with more than four louis, telling a very lamentable story that his buildings had cost him so much money, and that he was very much in debt. 'But pray where are you going?' said he to me. 'I

am going to London,' replied I, 'for the English newspapers have for a long time mentioned my husband's name; I dare say he is there.'"

The countess makes no mention in her narrative of another of her Bar-sur-Aube friends coming to see her while she lay concealed in the stone quarries outside the town—the mother of young Beugnot, to whom, in her days of affluence, the countess had given the surplus of twenty louis for her poor pensioners. This noble-hearted lady came out at night to comfort the wretched wanderer whom she believed to be innocent, and gave her all the consolation which a pious mind could suggest in a case so deplorable, returned her the twenty louis with some addition of her own, and parted with her like a Christian sister.† Such was the singular hold which this extraordinary woman seems to have had on the human heart, which began when she was a barefooted beggar on the public highway, and continued even when she was a branded outcast.

"I did not," continues the countess, "consider it prudent to return to the same inn which we had quitted at midnight, as I feared our being suspected, or taken for thieves, with which all the environs of Chaumont are

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. pp. 219—230.

† "Mémoires du Comte Beugnot," vol. i. p. 43.

greatly infested, I therefore chose to walk the remaining part of the night. The moon, which was at full, made it extremely pleasant. We proceeded nearly a mile and a half, but had not advanced far into the forest before we determined to return again towards the town. We knocked at the first cabaret we came to, but the people not only refused to open the door, but threatened to shoot us, taking us, without question, for thieves. Shivering with cold, we were necessitated to take up our lodging on the steps of their door till the next morning, and at this season the nights were extremely cold, and the country wore almost the appearance of winter. About six in the morning three peasants and a woman passed by, who had two large dogs with them. I related to them our situation, and we traversed the forest together as far as Columbey, where we parted. Having breakfasted, we took the post, which conveyed us seven leagues further. At six the next morning we recommenced our journey on foot. The day was terribly hot, and we suffered severely in climbing the mountain, which is extremely steep, and very high, without any shelter from the intense heat. Marianne, who was very much troubled with shortness of breath, and incapable of proceeding any farther, sat down and wept bitterly till, fortunately, a good old peasant, who was on horseback, offered to take her

behind him, to which she would not consent; but, as his house was but a short distance, she agreed to take the good old man's arm, while I seated myself on the horse. Taking Marianne's bundle, I gave the reins to the horse, who brought me to the house before his master, where the old man's daughter, who was lately married, recognized the beast. I briefly related to her the circumstance which procured me the pleasure of seeing her, whereupon she despatched one of her sisters to the curate's house to fetch some fish, and some of the best wine from another neighbour. Marianne was also well received. We were afterwards presented to the husband; and this good family lodged us with kindness. Not only did they regale us with a good supper of pigeons, and excellent fish, and delicious wine, but they accommodated us with their own bed, where we slept soundly for six hours. After a good breakfast we departed at ten in their cart to reach Joinville, these good people refusing to receive a single farthing for their entertainment.

"The keeper of a cabaret where we had sought shelter from a violent storm consented to conduct us as far as Nancy; and the rain having subsided, we availed ourselves of this proposal of our host, and continued our journey till we came into the midst of the most dismal forest I ever saw. It seemed a place perfectly adapted

for the black business of robbery or murder. Here another terrible storm came on, and we travelled in the midst of a heavy shower for almost two hours and a quarter. It was now near ten o'clock, and we were still in a hollow, one side of which bordered another forest reputed to be most dangerous, and along the skirts of which our road lay for a distance of some miles. I could not but feel alarmed, and what added to my fears was, that I had not the least knowledge of that road. Our conductor was also a very ill-looking fellow, and his conduct was such, that though I cannot say he had really any bad design, yet his behaviour was sufficiently equivocal to make me suspicious. After a dreary ride of a couple of hours I discovered a light: it is impossible to express how welcome that discovery was, as it dispelled those apprehensions which the darkness of the night had made more terrible. Our guide now composed himself a little, and told me he was going to bait his horse, after which we might pursue our journey. 'Most certainly,' replied I; but when we arrived at the inn, which was at about midnight, I determined to take some rest.

"We sat down to supper, and I told our guide that we did not choose to expose ourselves any more that night, as his horse seemed to be so much fatigued. This determination did not seem agreeable to him; he

stormed and swore, but all to no purpose. 'I am determined,' said I, resolutely, 'not to proceed till six o'clock in the morning.' We did, indeed, set out an hour sooner, but then there was no danger; though, when he put us down upon an eminence on the side of Nancy, I really thought he seemed to quit us with an air of regret at having failed of his prey. After having dined at Nancy, we took a voiture, which conducted us to Lunéville, where we stopped and slept at the 'Hôtel du Saint-Esprit,' from whence the next morning I wrote to M. Aminot, my cousin, an officer in the gendarmes. I took the precaution not to sign my name to this billet, in which I merely mentioned that a lady, one of his father's acquaintances, wished to communicate some news from his family. Upon the receipt of my billet he did not lose a moment, but followed Marianne, who introduced him to my chamber. He approached me: 'Really, madame,' said he, 'I have not the honour to recollect you.' 'Do you not know your unhappy cousin?' said I. I could utter no more; my sensations checked my tongue. He also appeared greatly astonished. 'Is it possible, my dear cousin,' said he, 'that this can be you?' He then embraced me affectionately, but his joy at meeting me could only be equalled by his surprise. The evening before my arrival, he had received letters from Paris, one of which he showed me, which

mentioned my surprising escape from the Salpêtrière, observing, that there were flying reports that the queen had facilitated my escape. My cousin and I spent two or three days together; and as I communicated to him my desire to pass through Switzerland, though without explaining my motive, he gave me in writing the plan of my route, which was by Luxembourg. After this interval of rest, Marianne and I pursued our journey, at five in the morning, on foot. We went eleven leagues this day; and the next, not being able to procure a coach, we were obliged to walk nine leagues farther. After this fatigue I really was fearful that I should lose my companion, who was most violently attacked with asthma; and for five days the physician and surgeon were doubtful of her recovery. As soon as Marianne was in a condition to support herself, we took a voiture for Metz, where we slept, and the next day departed for Thionville, about ten leagues from thence. The diligence put us down at the sign of the 'Three Kings,' kept by one Phillips."

This inn appears to have been a regular place of resort for the officers quartered in the town, and the countess pretended that, owing to certain consequential airs she indiscreetly gave herself, her incognito was more than suspected by these gentlemen, who importuned her with their visits and invitations to prolong her stay in

the town, which of course only made her the more anxious to get away.

"We proceeded on our journey," resumes Madame de la Motte, "and slept at Etauche; and the next day we departed in a tilted carriage. My intention was to go into Switzerland, and to remain a short time at some frontier town, from whence I could write to M. de la Motte, conceiving this was the only chance of being secure, and that Providence, which had so long guided and supported me, now granted me my wish, and directed me to an hospitable mansion inhabited by the most worthy, the most charitable of beings."

Here they stopped to bait their horses, and were pressed by the hostess to stay. "'If, madame,' observed she, 'you have any fears of being upon French ground, instantly dismiss them; nobody has any power over you here.' 'I have no fear,' replied I; 'but I am in want of money, and wish to write to my family.' 'Very well,' replied this good creature, 'for that very reason, I insist that you shall remain with me; you can write from hence.' About two days after I wrote to M. de la Motte, under cover to Mr. McMahon, his friend in London, to which I received an answer in about ten days, to the effect that he would make inquiries for some proper person that he could trust, whom he would send to fetch us as soon as

possible. Three weeks, however, passed away without any emissary from my husband. At this time my good hostess had no idea who I was: a report gained ground, and even reached the military society at Luxembourg, that there was a person at the house of Madame Schilss with a tall, stout girl, who perfectly answered the description of Madame de la Motte and the girl Marianne. I was every day visited by a great number of officers, both old and young, then residing in the village, who constantly prefaced their visits with expressions of condolence, observing how very dull it must be for me to be alone in a place so destitute of amusement. The Chevalier de Curel, of a family at Langres, appeared to be one of those most officious in circulating the report that I was the Countess de la Motte, which made me tremble for the consequences, and I conceived that, by associating my hostess in my confidence, she might find some means of silencing these reports. I therefore trusted her, leaving everything to her discretion. This good lady rendered me very essential service; for when persons came to make inquiries of her, she amused them with different stories, and at the same time enjoined the most profound secresy to every one of them.

"These reports make me extremely unhappy, particularly as I had not received any further news from

London, though the letter which I had received led me to hope that I should shortly have another to apprise me of the day when somebody would come to fetch me. At length, about the 27th of July, in the afternoon, a lady and gentleman came to inquire for me. Madame Schilss, informed that I had been long in expectation of some persons from England, was very well pleased. She introduced them as persons she could trust, and my own confidence was increased when the lady presented me with a letter from M. de la Motte."

Accompanied by this lady, whose name was McMahon, Madame de la Motte travelled first of all to Brussels and then to Ostend, whence, after a forty-two hours' passage, the pair arrived safe at Dover.

"At seven we took the route for London," continues Madame de la Motte, "where we arrived at seven the next morning, and at nine my eyes were greeted by the sight of M. de la Motte. It is not my intention to attempt to describe those mutual transports which glowed in either bosom at this interview. The situation, the circumstances of the parties, will raise corresponding emotions in the bosom of sensibility which will convey my idea more strongly than all the pomp of diction that may captivate the ear, but not impress the soul."*

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. p. 230, *et seq.*

XXXIX.

Aug. 1787—April, 1789.

IN LONDON.—THE COUNTESS GIVES UP FORGERY AND TAKES TO CALUMNY.

"I remained a fortnight," continues Madame de la Motte, "at the house of Mrs. McMahon, in the Haymarket, without venturing abroad to take the air, fearing lest I should be discovered. Every coffee-house in the neighbourhood of this place was filled with persons, many of whom were foreigners, eager to gratify their curiosity by seeing me. To prevent the inconvenience of being stared and pointed at, my friend, Mrs. McMahon, contrived to take me out about nine or ten o'clock in the evening."

The countess tells us that she found her husband in great distress, waiting impatiently the moment when his unfeeling uncle and aunt, Monsieur and Madame de Suremont, would send over such property of his as remained in their hands. The count had not long to wait, it appears, for the De Suremonts arrived in London

a few days after Madame de la Motte, when they delivered to him "a ring, which had formed the stud of the Necklace; a watch-chain which," says the count, "I sold for fifty pounds sterling; and a box I had taken in exchange, and which I sold to Gray for sixty pounds. Restoring these three articles, they told me that they were all they had been able to preserve of our jewels. Having had full leisure to invent these falsities, and persuaded that I could not have been informed of their conduct and the depredations they had committed on my property, they spared no pains to convince me of the truth of what they said, which would indeed have appeared reasonable had my intelligence not been so well founded.

"Affecting to be satisfied with what they had delivered to me, I, the same day, procured a writ to be issued, hoping thereby to frighten them into a surrender of the remaining jewels; but they imagining, from the inquiries they had made, and the advice they had received, that I could not by any means molest them, pretended to show the utmost indignation at my conduct, and finally declared that they had nothing left belonging to me; that they had sold every article; and that, could they have foreseen the ingratitude I now evinced towards them, they would have given up all my jewels to the government.

"Judging from their resolute tone that something more than words was requisite to bring them to a sense of justice, I insisted no farther; but, urged by necessity, put the writ into the hands of a sheriff's officer, who soon after, though much to my regret, arrested my uncle, a man of property, childless, enjoying the first offices in the place of his residence, and possessing the esteem of all its inhabitants, and whom I really respected. The case was otherwise with his beloved consort, a despicable woman, detested by all who knew her, who, I am certain, had prevailed upon her husband to be guilty of such a piece of meanness and injustice. The moment she saw him arrested she came to me, urging my acceptance of bills to the amount of my claims, still assuring me she had nothing of mine, and that she was going to part with some of her own property to purchase her husband's release. Finding she could not make me accede to the terms she proposed, she ended by acknowledging everything, and departed to fetch what she had asserted upon oath had been surrendered to government.

"On her return she gave up two rings that had belonged to the Necklace, a pair of drop ear-rings (out of which she had taken four diamonds, which I only perceived after we parted), a hoop ring, a neck-button, a hair-ring, set round with stones, and another ring of small value. The day after this forced restitution my

relations returned to their own home, where they have shared the remainder of the spoils; nor have I heard of them since, except to be informed, in a circumstantial manner, of all the havoc they have made in my house at Bar-sur-Aube, and of the contempt they have drawn upon themselves by their behaviour to me."*

The count informs us that he sold the articles which he so fortunately recovered to Gray the jeweller, who, spite of the part he took in the Necklace trial, was still ready enough to buy any more diamonds that the De la Mottes had to sell. The amount which the count received for these trinkets—all that remained to them of the famous Necklace—was two thousand two hundred pounds, a mere per-centage on the sixty thousand pounds at which the matchless jewel was originally valued, but still a nice enough little sum of money for people in a "hard-up" condition. True, it would not go very far in supporting even an approach to that state to which the De la Mottes had accustomed themselves, and which the hard fare and dismal cells of the Salpêtrière had not entirely destroyed madame's taste for. Unfortunately, "some people having learned that the count's relations had brought him nearly sixty thousand livres' worth of diamonds, eager to share the spoil, swore false debts

* "Mémoires Justificatifs de la Comtesse de la Motte," p. 210.

against him. I myself," says madame, "saw him arrested five times for different sums. M. de la Motte's attorney availed himself of this, and advised him, to use his own expression, to rid himself at once of these troublesome scoundrels by giving a gratuity of two hundred louis to one and one hundred and fifty louis to another, while eighty louis were given to an attorney who had never once called forth the laws in favour of his unfortunate client, from whom he had frequently received different sums to extricate him from real or fictitious embarrassments."

Such being the state of affairs means have to be found to replenish the almost empty exchequer. The count has recourse, no doubt, to the gaming-table, for all his life he has been an inveterate gambler. The countess, on whom her sentence has had this wholesome effect, it had cured her of her propensity for forgery and theft, bethinks herself that calumny, if the envenomed shaft be only skilfully aimed, might yield a golden prize. This contemplated slandering of the queen "was an arrow I still preserved," says Madame de la Motte, "as the best in my quiver, resolving to threaten, but not to shoot till reduced to the very last extremity."* In pursuance of this resolution, rumours are no doubt

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. p. 26.

wafted abroad—care being especially taken that they shall cross the Channel and penetrate to the royal apartments at Versailles—to the effect that the Countess de la Motte is engaged in writing her "Mémoires," wherein she intends to give "an exact detail of the extraordinary events which contributed to raise her to the dignity of confidant and favourite of the Queen of France, with some further particulars relative to the mysterious transaction of the Diamond Necklace."*

If Count de la Motte is to be believed, the Duchess de Polignac made at this period a second visit to England, again "to drink the Bath waters." Our opinion, however, is that, either by accident or design, he has put back the date of the visit (which it is quite certain the duchess made early in May, returning to France at the end of June)† for upwards of a month; for Madame de la Motte, according to her own statement, did not arrive in England until the early part of August. Either the case is as we have suggested, or else the countess arrived in England more than a month earlier than she represents herself to have done. Supposing this to be the fact, the visit of the duchess now alluded to

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. i. (see title-page.)

† "Correspondance Secrète Inédite sur Louis XVI., Marie-Antoinette," etc., vol. ii. p. 155.

would be the same visit of which we have already spoken.* The count in his autobiography states that, soon after his wife arrived in London, he received a message from the Duchess of Devonshire (the beautiful Georgina), begging him to call upon her at Devonshire House. The count goes there, and on being introduced into the drawing-room is presented to the Duchess de Polignac and her sister the Countess Diane, who observe to him that, having come over to drink the Bath waters, and having heard that Madame de la Motte proposed publishing some memoirs, they thought they might perhaps be of service to her — in other words, might save her from fresh persecutions, and insure her the means of an honourable existence for the future.

On the count communicating all this to his wife, she immediately resolved, he says, to leave London with the least possible delay, for she feels certain that the intention is to kidnap her and take her back to the Salpêtrière, and threatens she will throw herself into the Thames if her husband will not leave London with her that very day. The count, knowing that she was quite capable of carrying out her threat, wrote to the Duchess of Devonshire, explaining his wife's fears, and

* See *ante*, p. 159.

informing the duchess of her resolution. De la Motte, in answer to the Abbé Georgel's assertion that Madame de Polignac bought the MS. of the "Mémoires," affirms that at this time not a line of them was written, and never would have been written, had it not been for M. de Calonne (madame's old friend and former controller-general), who called a few days afterwards and suggested that the "Mémoires" should be at once written, so that they might profit by the offer of the queen, and he introduced to them a M. de la Tour, a writer in the *Courrier de l'Europe*, who would throw their rough notes into shape. The countess at once sets to work, and writes her celebrated "Mémoires Justificatifs." One can plainly see that the spirit which pervades this book was prompted by an axiom of which madame is herself the author, and which is to be found in the second volume of her "Life." "*No calumny*," says she, "*is so certain to be believed as that which one woman propagates against another.*"* In the midst of that long string of infamous slanders to be found in these so-called Justificatory Memoirs, with which the writer has sullied for all time the name of a noble-hearted, if somewhat erring woman, there occurs this passage: "If the Queen of France were not what she is, should I have been to her

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. p. 412.

what a defenceless bird is in the hands of a froward child, who, after being amused with it for a few moments, strips it of its feathers one by one, and then throws it into the destructive talons of a devouring animal?" Most people, after reading these "Mémoires Justificatifs," will be inclined to reverse the application of this simile, we fancy, and will look upon poor Marie-Antoinette as the defenceless bird, and Jeanne de St. Remi de Valois, with her destructive talons, as the devouring animal.

When the MS. of these "Mémoires" was completed, it was sent to M. de Calonne, who, according to the count, altered it to suit his own purposes. Madame says that the ex-minister even added indecent expressions against the queen—his aim being to get recalled to France and to secure the restoration of the blue ribbon of which he had been deprived. With this object in view, armed with the De la Motte libel, the ex-minister writes to Versailles, offering terms. The queen, however, rejects his proposal with disdain. Calonne now desires to have the MS. printed without delay, and for this purpose orders type and presses to be sent to the house where the De la Mottes reside, so that the work may be done in all secrecy.

During its progress, the ex-controller-general seems to have carried on an intrigue of another kind with the countess, and one which was, moreover, so notorious as

to be openly referred to in the scandalous publications of the time.* He used to twit her about the branding she had received, and on one occasion, when the countess was boasting in a large assembly of the capital hand she held at picquet, he spitefully observed she had better be careful, or she would certainly be *marked.*† Some little misunderstanding which occurred between the pair made them thenceforth at daggers-drawn with each other.

Just about this time, a new ambassador from the French court arrives in England—the Marquis de la Luzerne, brother of the Bishop of Langres, the countess's early patron, if not lover. He has heard of Calonne's proceedings, and loses no time in sending an envoy to the De la Mottes, to point out to them that Calonne will be certain to play them false, and to make arrangements for an interview. Calonne gets scent of what is going on, and tries to carry off the MS., but does not succeed. The interview with the ambassador takes place; Count de la Motte shows M. de Luzerne the MS., with Calonne's corrections and interlineations, and it is arranged that the ambassador shall make a definitive proposition so soon as he has received instructions from

* See "Julie Philosophie, ou, Le Bon Patriote," vol. ii. p. 17.

† "Correspondance Secrète Inédite sur Louis XVI., Marie-Antoinette," etc., vol. ii. p. 237.

Paris. Calonne hears of this interview, goes to the De la Mottes, and demands the restitution of the MS.; threatens all the terrors of the law if they do not comply. The count remains firm, and madame, by the aid of an English naval officer, who subsequently translated her "Mémoires" into English, shows up the ex-French minister of finance in a pamphlet which she styles, "A Scourge for Calonne," and which goes off like wildfire, copies fetching as much as six louis each in Paris on its first appearance.* The Marquis de la Luzerne, having received his instructions, communicates them to the count. He is commissioned to make an offer of ten thousand francs a year, with fifty thousand francs down, to enable the De la Mottes to discharge their more pressing debts. The countess, according to her husband's account, is opposed to accepting this very liberal offer, talks very big about her position before the world, clearing her character, &c.; the count however, thinking the solid pudding is to be preferred to all this, over-persuades his wife, and they give in their acquiescence. The money is to be speedily forthcoming; but, unfortunately, one of those proverbial slips between the cup and the lips now chances. Cardinal-Archbishop Loménie de Brienne is dismissed from his office of prime minister, and

* "Journals and Correspondence of Lord Auckland," vol. i. p. 304.

M. Necker is summoned to occupy his place, and M. Necker will have nothing whatever to do with a De la Motte negotiation in any shape or form. Such is the count's version of this affair of the "Mémoires," but, like everything else from the De la Motte mint, it must be received with suspicion.*

When or how the MS. of these "Mémoires" of Madame de la Motte's was sold to the French court, we have no means of ascertaining; but that it was sold, and that after the sale the "Mémoires" were published in breach of good faith, is a moral certainty. In all probability the Duchess de Polignac negotiated the purchase, which was likely enough carried out through the medium of the French ambassador, the statement about M. Necker being a falsehood concocted to conceal the fact of any sale of the MS. having taken place. Madame Campan asserts, in the most solemn manner, that she herself had seen, "in the queen's hands, a manuscript of the infamous memoirs of the woman Lamotte, which had been brought to her from London, and which were corrected by the very hand of M. de Calonne in all those places where a total ignorance of the usages of the court had made this wretch commit the most palpable errors."†

* "Mémoires Inédits du Comte de la Motte," par L. Lacour.

† "Memoirs of Marie-Antoinette," by Madame Campan, vol. ii. pp. 107-8.

The countess herself indirectly admits that it was the desire of pecuniary gain rather than any particular anxiety to "clear her character before the world," which induced the publication of her "Justificatory Memoir." "My husband," says she, "standing on the very brink of ruin"—they had received since they had been in England two thousand two hundred pounds for their diamonds, and at least as much more we should suppose for the MS. of the "Mémoires," so that if this statement is true, they must have dissipated between four and five thousand pounds in the course of a couple of years—"was necessitated to have recourse to printing my 'justification' as the only means of satisfying the craving demands of his creditors, whom he was obliged to avoid, as they made every effort to arrest him; while I, with misery like a vulture gnawing at my heart, and poverty chasing even at my very heels, detesting that burden of life which it is yet my duty to support, and, God forgive me! cursing the hour of my birth, remained defenceless—unable to protect myself from insult, or to ward off the blows which malice aimed at my reputation.

"M. de la Motte printed five thousand 'Mémoires' in French and three thousand in English, confident, from the advice he had received, that the queen would not suffer them to be published, though I constantly

represented to him the absurdity of this belief. . . . How could he hope the government would make terms with us, when they knew that the original MS. of the 'Mémoires' was in the possession of M. de Calonne, who could make it public whenever he thought proper?* It never accorded with my sentiments," continues the countess, "to enter into any pecuniary negotiations with the government; the only thing I had at heart was the vindication of my honour; and, had I been left to my own discretion, neither sceptres nor crowns should have purchased my silence."

This was a safe enough reservation, as neither sceptres nor crowns were likely to be offered even to a descendant of the house of Valois; but we question whether madame could have withstood the temptation of a certain number of *billets* of the Bank of France, had these been tendered to her, for times were hard with the De la Mottes, and it was necessary above all things to "put money in the purse." At any rate, she would have promised to keep silence, would have taken the money, and then have broken her word. She

* Husband and wife here contradict each other point blank. The count in his posthumous "Mémoires" maintains that the MS. was not surrendered to Calonne; the countess says it was—in all probability another falsehood, concocted by her, to induce the public to believe that the MS. had not been already sold to the French court.

was quite capable of doing this, we may be perfectly certain.

It must be remembered that all the time this bargaining is going forward for the sale and purchase of these wretched libels, Paris—nay, France itself—is in a state of ferment, what with the meeting of its states-general, the quarrels of its first and third orders, the braving of the royal authority, the dismissal of Necker, and troops constantly under arms, and riots in the streets out of which bloodshed arises, and the tocsin sounding from all steeples; with attacks upon the prisons, and the states-general in permanent session, to be followed ere long by the storming and capture of the Bastille—in other words, a Revolution!

XL.

April, 1787—May, 1792.

THE COUNT HAWKS THE LIBELS ABROAD.—IS IMPRISONED IN LA FORCE AND THE CONCIERGERIE.—THE LAST OF THE DE LA MOTTE LIBELS.

Count de la Motte, having circulated copies of his wife's "Mémoires Justificatifs" among the London booksellers and in other directions, and being, as usual, involved in debt, thinks it prudent to make an excursion to Holland, where he believes some business in these libels may be done; for it is, reasons he, just as easy to smuggle copies of them into France over the Flemish frontier as across the British Channel, and we all know that Mynheer has never been particular as to the character of the wares he trades in. To Holland, therefore, the count goes in the month of April, 1789. In tracing his career from this date we have but few materials to guide us beyond his own posthumous "Mémoires,"* which abound in evident exaggerations,

* "Mémoires Inédits du Comte de la Motte-Valois," Paris, 1858. This work, edited by M. Louis Lacour, is stated to have been printed

and no less evident falsehoods. The reader is therefore cautioned to accept the count's statements with the same reserve which we have already asked of him in respect to many of the assertions of the countess. Truth would seem to have had no place in the De la Motte system of morals.

Before the count had brought his negotiations respecting an edition of Madame's "Mémoires" to a close, news comes across the Low Countries of a rising of the people of Paris and the fall of the Bastille. The count forthwith borrows fifteen louis from one of his Dutch acquaintances, with whose daughter he has been flirting up to the point that her father speaks to him seriously of matrimony, and hurries off to Paris, where he arrives on the 18th of August. He at once addresses himself to Bailly, the newly-elected mayor, from whom he asks a safe-conduct until the judgment against him in the Necklace affair can be brought before the new tribunals. He next has an interview with Mirabeau, who, he says, had already heard of his arrival, and informed the Duke d'Orleans of it, telling the duke at the same time they might reckon upon the count joining them in the attack which they contemplated making upon the

from a duplicate copy of the manuscript Mémoires written by M. de la Motte in 1825, at the instigation of the French minister of police. See *post*, p. 264.

"Austrian she-wolf" (Marie-Antoinette). The count thereupon calls on the duke, who proposes to him that he shall present a petition at the bar of the National Assembly, and subsequently supplies him with funds through Mirabeau.

The count tells a mysterious story of some unknown individual calling upon him at this period, and making an appointment for him to be, between twelve and one o'clock at night, in the Avenue de Paris, at Versailles, near the iron railings of the château, where he would find Mirabeau, disguised in a long blue cloak and round hat. The count keeps the appointment, and meets with Mirabeau as described, and receives from him a form of petition, which he is to copy out by six o'clock in the morning, and then return the original draft. Mirabeau, he says, called at his hôtel at the time named, when he handed him the copy of the petition, and pretended that the draft was destroyed, pointing at the same time to some fragments of burnt paper in the grate, as proof of the fact. Out of this draft petition, in Mirabeau's handwriting, the count sees his way to make some money. Without loss of time he takes it to M. de Montmorin, minister for foreign affairs, informs him of the nature of the intrigue which is going on, and explains who are the prime movers in it. By this means he gains over the minister, who is, of course,

all affability, and speaks to him of the offer made some time back by M. de la Luzerne, which offer, he says, he is quite prepared to carry out. From this moment the count is in clover, for he obtains bribes from both parties, each of whom he of course sells to the other. After a time, matters being considered ripe, Mirabeau urges him to come to the bar of the National Assembly, and present his petition; but this the count is indisposed to do. He pretends, therefore, that he has consulted two advocates, both of whom advise him that the Assembly is not competent to deal with his case, and so manages to shuffle out of the affair, thereby however cutting himself adrift from the Orleans party.

Count de la Motte, it seems, has an old score to clear off with Father Loth for what he professes to regard as his contemptible betrayal of the countess in the Necklace affair. He ascertains that, as a reward for his treachery, the De Rohan family have got Loth appointed one of the brotherhood of the Knights of Malta, with comfortable quarters in the Temple. To the Temple, therefore, the count hies, armed with a stout club, with which he proposes knocking out poor Father Loth's brains. "I know not," says the count, "whether he was warned, or whether he recognized me wandering about the Temple, but the fact is he quitted the place abruptly, and I could never find out what

became of him;" a lucky result for Father Loth, who thereby preserved his customary modicum of brains in an uncracked skull.

The famous march of women to Versailles took place at this period, and the Paris papers announced that Madame de la Motte led the column of Menades, who went to storm the château. This was a piece of pure invention, for the countess was still residing in England, where, according to the count, overtures were from time to time made to her by the agents of the Duke d'Orleans. M. de Montmorin, hearing of this, proposes furnishing an apartment for the countess, and providing her with funds to come to Paris, so that she may be beyond the duke's influence; but the countess, having a wholesome dread of the branding-iron, and fearing that a "C" (*calumniatrice*) might be added to the "V" (*voleuse*) that already graced her shoulders, and having, too, the terrors of the Salpêtrière before her eyes, prefers remaining where she is, spite of Orleans' agents and other ills by which she is beset, a resolution which, as we shall presently see, proved most unfortunate for her.

Some short time after the receipt of the countess's letter wherein she expresses the above determination, news reaches the count of a most frightful accident having befallen his wife, and almost immediately after-

wards comes a long letter from herself, written on her bed of suffering, corroborative of the dismal intelligence. The count—who is openly living with a notorious courtesan of the period, *la belle impure Seymour*, as she was styled*—takes the matter very coolly; writes, no doubt, a short sympathizing note in reply, but as for hastening to the bedside of his dying wife, to watch beside it even for a few hours, and speak to her those few kind words of comfort which might have helped to lighten the gloom of her departing moments, this never enters into the man's thoughts. The summer days pass pleasantly enough with him; he can lounge in the Palais Royal gardens in the morning, and in the Palais Royal gambling saloons at night, and it is only from the hawkers in the streets that he gains intelligence of his wretched wife's death. Hearing the news shouted out on the boulevards, he buys one of the broadsides and turns into a neighbouring café to read it, takes it all for granted, and so far as we can discover, troubles himself no further on the subject.

Deprived of his helpmate, the miserable woman on whose mendicancy, vices and crimes he had lived from the very day that he married her, the count has now to work single-handed against the government, and after a

* "Correspondance Secrète Inédite sur Louis XVI., Marie-Antoinette," &c., vol. ii. p. 481.

time against society itself, for the means of subsistence. He obtains an audience of M. Duport du Tertre, minister of justice, whom he presses with reference to a rehearing of the process against him in the Necklace affair, and from whom he asks, and eventually obtains, a letter *d'ester à droit*, which confers the right of appearing before a court of law spite of the judgment of the Parliament of Paris, which still hangs over him. Of course if the count can get the process reheard, and the judgment set aside, all the De la Motte property seized at Bar-sur-Aube would be restored to him. Duport du Tertre was by no means opposed to this course, for though a minister of the crown, he sympathized with that party who wished to bring Marie-Antoinette before the new tribunals with reference to her share—for they persisted in believing her to have had a share—in the Necklace transaction.* Meanwhile, by some skilful manœuvring of his own, the count is brought into communication with M. de Laporte, intendant of the civil list, keeper, in fact, of the king's privy purse, who, he says, tells him that the king, having heard so good an account of his opinions, and conduct, and devotion to his person, has accorded him a certain credit on the civil list, and has commanded Laporte to say that

* "Histoire de Marie-Antoinette," par E. et J. de Goncourt, p. 293.

justice shall certainly be done him in the Necklace affair. And as a sort of earnest of what the count is to expect in future, M. de Laporte at parting places in his hand a sealed packet, containing two thousand four hundred francs in assignats.

Time wears on, the troubles of the court increase, and the flight of the royal family from Paris is decided on. The count asserts that it was arranged for him to accompany an old friend of his, ex-mayor of Lyons, in a carriage, in which a large amount of specie was to have been stowed away, and that they were to have kept a short distance ahead of the royal party. For some reason not given, this arrangement, which we do not believe was ever made, is not carried out.

The count, with whom the revision of the Necklace process has become a fixed idea, persistently bores the minister of justice to order a rehearing before one of the new courts, and in November, 1791, by the king's direction, according to the count, a sort of council is held, at which M. Duport du Tertre presides, when it is decided that the count shall appeal to the third tribunal, the president of which is a certain M. de Plane, believed to be amenable to court influence, and who, the count tells us, fought by the side of his father at the battle of Minden, and who promises to do all he can to assist the son of his old comrade.

No sooner is this decision arrived at than the count obtains one thousand crowns from Laporte, who asks him to call upon him at the Tuileries that evening. The count goes, and to his astonishment finds himself in the presence of the king. His first movement, he tells us, is to throw himself at his sovereign's feet. On his rising, the king informs him that, from what he has heard of him, and the good opinion of him which he has himself formed, he has decided to accord him all he asks. He then inquirés of the count whether he happens to have with him the original draft of the petition drawn up by Mirabeau. Of course, the count has brought his portfolio, and instantly produces the document in question. "*Le misérable!*" exclaims the king, "he deserved his fate;" which observation of his majesty's satisfies the count that Louis XVI. was not ignorant Mirabeau had been poisoned. The son of the Chevalier of St. Louis, and former gendarme at Lunéville, having declared to his sovereign that he was ready to shed his last drop of blood for him, now makes his obeisance, and retires from the royal cabinet.

On January 4, 1792, Count de la Motte, having taken the precaution to go the day beforehand to La Force, and choose his cell just as a man might engage the most convenient vacant room at an hotel, proceeds to constitute himself a prisoner. His apartment being

somewhat damp, he orders a large fire to be made, and retires to rest for the night, and is, by-and-by, aroused from his sleep by a sense of suffocation. Springing out of bed, he finds his cell on fire, and shouts loudly for assistance. After a time he is rescued, but not until his hair is singed half off his head, and his great-coat burnt, more or less, to tinder. Hébert's "Père Duchesné" came out the next day with an accusation against the "Austrian she-wolf," of having caused the prison to be set on fire to consume both M. de la Motte and the documents he was on the eve of producing implicating her in the Necklace affair. From La Force the count is transferred to the Conciergerie, and on the second day of his arrival there his old friend and former barber, Burlaindeux—he to whom the De la Motte furniture was wont to be consigned to save it from being taken in execution*—pays him a visit in company with some seven or eight others, whom Burlaindeux introduces as Manuel (afterwards procureur of the commune), Sergent (one of the "killers" at the ensuing September massacres), Panis (friend of Danton's), Robespierre, Marat, Hébert and others, all of whom have come to compliment the count upon his courage, and to offer their aid, and all of whom, of course,

* See *ante*, vol. i. p. 68.

vilify poor Marie-Antoinette in most offensive language. De la Motte then has his say, tells his visitors that he is a *voluntary* prisoner, and exclaims vehemently against the old Paris parliament for having "sacrificed an innocent woman, deprived of the means of defence, that they might save a debauched prelate." At the conclusion of the count's harangue, his new friends, seemingly very well satisfied with what he has said to them, take their leave.

The hearing of the appeal for the revision of the Necklace process at length comes on. De la Motte pretends that the public excitement is intense, the hall being packed from floor to ceiling with Jacobins—ragged men and slatternly women for the most part—in the midst of whom he recognizes Burlaindeux. According to the count, the judgment which the third tribunal eventually pronounces, at the suggestion of the president, would have had the effect of restoring to him all his property seized by the crown, if at this moment the minister of justice had not given orders for all the documents relating to the process to be remitted to the *procureur du roi*, who afterwards brings the whole affair before the first tribunal. The following letter, written by the count to the king, puts the matter, however, in a somewhat different light:—

"Sire,—When I voluntarily constituted myself a

prisoner I should, in accordance with the promise made to me by M. Duport (du Tertre), and after the precautions which he had taken, have obtained my liberty and the entire restitution of my property within the week. For four months have I been detained and persecuted by a cabal which, disregarding all prudential considerations, seeks to give an annoying *éclat* to this affair. M. de Plane, president and judge of the third tribunal, was appointed to examine me, which he did in the most indecent manner, his questions having no other object than to try and compromise the queen, and principally to find the means of confronting her with me in open court, as a necessary witness and deponent of facts set forth in this horrid process.

"M. A. DE LA MOTTE.

"From the Conciergerie of the Palace, May 5th, 1792." *

At the time the foregoing letter was written, unless there is a mistake in the month—May instead of April—judgment had actually been pronounced by the third tribunal exactly one month previously, namely, on the 5th of April, a circumstance, one would imagine, of which the count could hardly have been ignorant.†

* Autograph letter from Count de la Motte to Louis XVI., in the collection of M. Feuillet de Conches.

† See the judgment of the first tribunal, *post*, p. 246.

The count's old friend Burlaindeux pays him another visit at this particular juncture. "Dog of an aristocrat!" exclaims the enraged barber, thrusting his fist in the count's face, "Capet and the Austrian she-wolf will never help you to get out of this prison." After thus abruptly delivering himself, Burlaindeux, to the count's great relief, quietly retires.

While the De la Motte appeal was going forward, one day a stranger asks to speak to the count. He proves to be a bookseller named Gueffier, who has received, he says, from his correspondent in London the whole of the French edition of the last "Mémoires" of Madame de la Motte,* which "Mémoires," the count avails himself of this opportunity of stating (believe him, who pleases), were written against his advice. The count says that he communicated the above information to M. de Laporte, who obtained the king's authority for him to treat with Gueffier for the purchase of the work. The fact, however, is that De la Motte wrote direct to the king upon the subject, as may be seen by the extract which we are enabled to give from his letter, which, curiously enough, bears the same date as his other letter to the king—namely, May 5th, 1792:

* "Vie de Jeanne de St. Remi de Valois, Comtesse de la Motte, écrit par elle-même."

. . . "There has just been bought up by a bookseller of Paris, named Gueffier, 'the Life of Madame de la Motte, written by herself,' and printed in London. Before constituting myself a prisoner, I informed M. Duport (du Tertre) of the existence of this work, which is really by Madame de la Motte, and which she sold on certain conditions, in order to maintain herself, to a printer in London, who ought, after having received what he has advanced and his own charges, to deliver up the complete editions of the work in French and English. Your majesty has, without doubt, been informed of these facts by M. Duport, who some time since endeavoured to buy up the work, and prevent its being made public. It appears that these endeavours were without result, as the French copies have arrived at Rouen, and are to be published in a few days at the shop of this Gueffier. This is what the London printer, whom I saw two days ago, assured me.

"I have informed my counsel of these details, and they seem much alarmed for the public tranquillity, and that of your majesty and the queen, on account of the dangers of the publication of this work. They have imperatively counselled me to have it seized before it arrives in Paris, as the property of Madame de la Motte, and now belonging to me by the right of succession. But as the booksellers who have purchased it, and who

advanced Madame de la Motte the money, claim what is due to them, I shall either be forced to abandon the seizure or to pay them their demand. I cannot myself make a sacrifice of twenty thousand francs. I, therefore, beg your majesty to put yourself to the necessary expense in order to frustrate the projects of these evil-disposed persons. My plan, if it meets with your majesty's approval, is to seize and seal up this work at Rouen, and to offer the holders of it the amount due to them from Madame de la Motte. The whole will then be sealed up and delivered by my counsel to M. de Laporte, who will dispose of it according to your majesty's orders."*

Negotiations are opened with Gueffier, who offers to surrender the whole of the copies on receiving a sum of twenty-five thousand francs. The count suggests eighteen thousand, which Gueffier eventually agrees to accept, whereupon M. de Laporte forwards the count twenty thousand francs, with an intimation that he need not trouble himself to return the balance.†

An attempt, of which the king and M. de Laporte evidently knew nothing, had, it seems, been previously made to sell the manuscript of this edition of the coun-

* Extract from autograph letter from Count de la Motte to Louis XVI., in the collection of M. Feuillet de Conches.

† "Mémoires Inédits du Comte de la Motte," pp. 237-9.

tess's life to Marie-Antoinette. But the queen, guided by past experience, saw clearly enough that, whether she bought the manuscript or not, the libel was equally certain to be published, and indeed it must have been printed off at the time the manuscript was offered to her. She therefore peremptorily refused to enter into any negotiation. "At the commencement of 1792," writes Madame Campan, "an estimable priest asked of me a private interview. He had heard of a new libel of Madame de la Motte's, and told me he had remarked that the people who came from London to get it printed in Paris* were actuated only by the desire of gain, and that they were ready to deliver up the manuscript for one thousand louis, if some friend of the queen could be found disposed to make this sacrifice to ensure her tranquillity.

"I communicated this proposition to the queen, who declined it, and commanded me to reply that, at the time when it was possible to punish the circulators of those libels she had considered them so atrocious and so improbable that she had disdained to take any steps for arresting their course, that if she now were imprudent enough to buy up one only, the active espionage of the Jacobins would not fail to discover it, and the libel so bought would not the less be printed, and would become

* The work was really printed in London, and, with the exception of its supplement, before the death of the countess in August, 1792.

much more dangerous when the public learnt the means she had adopted to keep it from their knowledge."*

M. de Laporte had the edition of the countess's life, which had been purchased from Gueffier, conveyed to his hotel; but after a time, growing alarmed at the daily increasing excesses of the population of Paris, and fearful that at some moment when he least expected it, an irruption might be made into his house, and these "Mémoires" carried off and distributed among the people, he gave an order for them to be burnt with all necessary precaution and secrecy. Unfortunately, the person who received this order confided the execution of it to one Riston, a dangerous intriguer, and former advocate of Nancy, escaped, a year previously, from the gallows, by favour of the new tribunals, although he had been proved guilty of fabricating impressions of the great seal, and forging decrees of council in proceedings undertaken at the request of the king's household. "I had," says Bertrand de Moleville, minister of marine, "to read over to the witnesses their depositions, and to confront them with the accused, at the peril of being assassinated, not only by Riston, who, at one of the sittings, threw himself upon me with a knife, but also by the brigands in his pay, with whom the hall

* "Memoirs of Marie-Antoinette," by Madame Campan, vol. ii. p. 194, *et seq.*

of audience was filled, and who were enraged at finding their threatening outcries did not prevent me from repressing the insults which the accused offered unceasingly to the witnesses who came to depose against him.

"This same Riston, who a year previously was in the toils of a capital accusation, instituted against him in the name and by order of the king, finding himself charged with a commission which interested his majesty, and the importance of which was apparent from the mystery attaching to it, troubled himself less about the best way of executing it than in making a parade of this mark of confidence. On May 30th, 1792, (at ten o'clock in the morning, he had the printed sheets conveyed in a cart, which he himself accompanied, to the porcelain manufactory at Sèvres, and caused a great fire to be made of them in the presence of all the workmen belonging to the establishment, who were expressly forbidden to approach near it. All this parade, and the suspicion to which it gave rise in these critical times, caused the matter to be publicly talked of and discussed; and the same evening it was brought before the Assembly, when Brissot, and others of the Jacobin party, argued with as much effrontery as vehemence that these papers, burnt with so much secrecy, could have been nothing else but the registers and correspondence of the Austrian committee. M. de

Laporte was called to the bar, and gave a most exact account of the facts. Riston was also summoned, and confirmed the account given by M. de Laporte. But these explanations, however satisfactory they ought to have been, did not appease the violent feeling which this affair had excited in the Assembly.*

Madame Campan tells an interesting anecdote in connection with this unfortunate casualty. "One day," observes she, "M. d'Aubin came and said to me 'the National Assembly has been engaged with a denunciation made by the workmen of the manufactory of Sèvres, who brought to the president's desk a pile of pamphlets, which they said was the life of Marie-Antoinette. The director of the manufactory was called to the bar, and declared that he had received orders to burn these printed works in the kilns used for baking the porcelain.' Whilst," says Madame Campan, "I was giving an account of this to the queen, the king coloured and hung his head over his plate. The queen said to him, 'Do you know anything of this, sir?' The king did not answer. Madame Elisabeth asked him to explain what it all meant. Still the same silence. I promptly retired. A few minutes

* "Mémoires Secrets pour servir à l'Histoire de la dernière année du règne de Louis XVI^e^," par A. F. Bertrand de Moleville, vol. ii. p. 218, *et seq.*

afterwards the queen came to me, and told me it was the king who, out of regard for her, had caused the whole of the edition printed from the manuscript of which I had spoken to her, to be purchased, and that M. de Laporte had not thought of any more secret way of destroying the work than having it burnt at Sèvres, in the presence of two hundred workmen, one hundred and eighty of whom were certain to be Jacobins. She told me that she had concealed her grief from the king; that he was dismayed, and that she could say nothing when she found that his tenderness and goodwill towards her had been the cause of this accident." *

Such was the end of the last of the De la Motte libels, which were nevertheless reprinted in subsequent years, and even so recently as the year 1846, more than half a century after their first dissemination, so thorough is the vitality of calumny!

Marie-Antoinette, in reply to questions put to her at her trial, with reference to the papers burnt at Sèvres, said: "I believe it was a libel. I was not, however, consulted on the matter. I was told of it afterwards. Had I been consulted, I should have opposed the burning of any writing which was against me." †

* "Memoirs of Marie-Antoinette," by Madame Campan, vol. ii. p. 194.

† "Procès de Marie-Antoinette," p. 117.

XLI.

MAY, 1789—AUG. 1791.

RETRIBUTION.—THE CRIMINAL AND HER ACCOMPLICES.

WE must now go back in our narrative to the point of time when Count de la Motte left England to traffic in his wife's "Mémoires" abroad, with what success we have already seen. Judging from the countess's dolorous account of their dealings with them in England, it is evident that trouble as well as profit resulted from these "Mémoires Justificatifs." Neither she nor her husband were satisfied with disposing of copies of them through the ordinary channels, but sought to force a trade among merchants, and even hatters. It seems that nine hundred copies of the French, and two hundred and fifty copies of the English edition of the "Mémoires," together with two hundred and eighty-three copies of the countess's "Scourge for Calonne"—published at the several prices of one guinea, half a guinea, and five shillings—were intrusted to a French hatter in New Bond Street, named Coup, who

advanced the count, at various times, something like three hundred pounds upon them. "Without any previous demand," says Madame de la Motte, "Coup came one day (May 14, 1789), in the absence of my husband, at the head of half a dozen bailiffs, and lodged an execution at my house in Chester Place, where he for the first time told me he had sufficient authority, my husband never having even mentioned the circumstance to me.

"This was another disagreeable attack, and I saw my house and furniture sold on the 21st of May, without being able to procure any account from this man of the books he had sold, which would have been more than double his demand, as at that particular juncture the sale of these books must have been at once rapid and extensive. He even had the meanness to put an execution upon four or five hundred 'Mémoires' which remained with him, and which were sold for only six guineas, and were resold by the purchasers at half a crown and three shillings each.

"Of the five thousand 'Mémoires' which had been printed, Coup had received only nine hundred. I proceed to mention what became of the remaining ones. My credulous husband, profuse of confidence, notwithstanding he had been formerly deceived by a man who, pretending to be a capital merchant, trusted this man

with a certain number of 'Mémoires,' French as well as English, which he was to dispose of in merchandise to his correspondents in different countries, from whence, in a short time, he would receive remittances.

"M. de la Motte, though formerly deceived, yet gave him his confidence, and delivered to him nine hundred and nine French 'Mémoires,' valued at a guinea each, three hundred and eighty-six English ditto, valued at half that sum, and a number of the 'Scourge for Calonne,' for all of which we never received one farthing. This man's wife, upon whom I took pity, remained in my house during the time of the execution, under the specious pretext of rendering me service. Alas! what service did she render me? Small miniature paintings of great value, and other valuable articles to the amount of forty or fifty guineas, she put into her pocket, and when I reclaimed these effects, she made me a most audacious and impertinent reply, to the effect that when M. de la Motte should pay them, they would then give an account. Against their injustice I have no remedy. They have no property, and I am heartily sick of having any business with attorneys, who have already had too much to do with my unfortunate husband.

"Mr. Ridgway, who was the publisher of all these 'Mémoires,' had, upon supposition, about four hundred. These he sold for about one hundred and eighty pounds,

out of which there was eighty pounds for expenses. I have scarce received one hundred pounds, and I have remaining, out of eight thousand copies, eight hundred French, and three hundred English "Mémoires," for which I have received no money.

"Very soon after this execution was levied against me, my servant, Angelica (the same who was with the countess in the Salpêtrière, we suppose) got into bad company, and was advised to sue for her wages, to the amount of twenty guineas. She applied to an attorney, who threatened me with arrest. Alas! I that am nobly descended, that have been the favourite of a queen, that have basked in the sunshine of affluence and felt the smiles of distinction, am now nothing; and were it not for the benevolence of some respectable characters, I might probably be reduced to the dire necessity of returning to my former mean situation, and of imploring charity of every passing stranger."

And this is what ten years of struggling, scheming, intriguing, and petitioning; of lying, swindling, forgery, theft, slander, and depravity—and all to be lady of the manor of Fontette—have brought this wretched woman to at last! "Misery, like a vulture, gnawing her heart, and poverty chasing at her very heels;" her household goods sold for debt incurred with respect to her malicious libels; herself threatened with arrest by the very servant

whose release she procured from the Salpêtrière; while her husband is flirting in Holland with some flaxen-haired young *frau*. Either to console herself in the midst of these accumulated troubles, or else, and which is by far the most likely reason, with the view of pecuniary gain, she now writes her "Life," in two volumes, octavo, taking care to reiterate therein all her previous malignant slanders against the French queen.

"Nothing," says she, almost prophetically, "could have induced me to undertake a task like this—to retrace a life which has already been too long, and which, if my ideas of it are as just as I could wish, is drawing fast to a close; nothing," she continues, in her most high-flown style, "could have roused me from this lethargy of grief but the desire of rescuing my memory, when this fluttering pulse shall cease to beat, and the hand that now guides my pen be mouldered into dust, from the detractions of malice. Abused, insulted, and disgraced, the wounds of bleeding honour are too deep to be closed. Do they call for vengeance? No; there is a just and righteous Judge, before whose tribunal I shall again meet my enemies, where neither the strong arm of oppression, nor the 'gilded' hand of offence will be sufficiently powerful to vanquish innocence."*

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. i. p. 221.

Such were the motives which inspired the countess to write her "Life." Curiously enough, the Duke d'Orleans chances to be in England at this precise period —he arrived in London during October, 1789, and did not return to France until the following July— and it is believed that he encourages madame, by liberal bribes, to prosecute her task, even if he does not have a hand himself in its production.* The count, too, is by this time in Paris, and in communication with the government, and there are the best of reasons for believing that the countess's main object in writing this work was to extort more money from a well-nigh bankrupt royal exchequer. Be this as it may, the work is completed towards the close of the year 1790, when the Count de la Motte is receiving bribes both from the French ministry and the Orleans party; but "its publication is delayed," we are informed, "from overtures being made for its suppression by a person pretending to be charged with a commission for that purpose from the then highest powers in France. Some months were wasted in fruitless negotiation, till the unexpected flight and consequent embarrassments of the royal fugitives destroyed that flattering prospect and pleasing hope of the countess's being relieved from

* "Carlyle s Critical and Miscellaneous Essays," vol. iv. p. 37.

the difficulties in which the most vindictive persecutions had involved her. The speedy flight of the negotiator, who had impressed her with an idea that she would soon be placed beyond the reach of fortune by the immediate settlement of an annuity upon herself, and the liquidation of her husband's debts, on condition of giving up the manuscript and printed copies of her 'Life,' left her to struggle with these new-created difficulties which his flattering assurances had tended so greatly to increase."*

The struggle was but a brief one, for a very few days afterwards a catastrophe occurred which speedily placed this wretched woman beyond the reach of worldly trouble. According to the count, certain agents of the Duke d'Orleans, finding themselves frustrated in their efforts to induce Madame de la Motte to quit England, conceived the idea of having her arrested, in the belief that, when they had her in their power, they could by promises, and the prospect of a brilliant revenge, prevail upon her to allow herself to be conducted to Paris. "Among these infamous agents," says the count, "there was one who went before a justice of the peace and swore on the Scriptures that Madame de la Motte owed him a hundred guineas, when he was immediately

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," Supplement, vol. ii. p. 58.

furnished with the necessary order for her arrest. Armed with this document, the officers presented themselves at her house, and requested her to accompany them—she being ignorant all the while of even the name of the villain who had sworn to the debt. Even had the debt been real, no one had the right to arrest a married woman, and Madame de la Motte was sufficiently acquainted with the laws of the country to be aware of this circumstance. Still, it was necessary that she should furnish proofs of her marriage, which she could not do, as, when she quitted Paris, all her papers remained at the Bastille. These scoundrels, therefore, insisted upon carrying her off; whereupon she declared to them that, if they used violence, she would put herself under the protection of the passers-by, who would come to her rescue. She told them, however, that she was going to send for her lawyer, who would, if requisite, find the necessary bail, and she despatched her servant for that purpose, cautioning her beforehand, that if the lawyer was not at home, she was, on her return, to make her a certain sign, and to say that he was coming, so that she might settle within her own mind what course to pursue in this emergency. Angelica had no sooner left, than the countess, with the view of keeping her vile persecutors in a good humour, served them with some luncheon and a bottle of port wine. While they were

seated at table she walked about the room, conversing with them, and looking out of the window from time to time to watch for the return of Angelica, who, seeing her mistress at the window, and not having found the lawyer at home, made her the sign agreed upon.

"Madame de la Motte, seizing a favourable moment, abruptly opened the door and double-locked the scoundrels inside the room. The window being open, one of them looked out to see whether she left the house. Her extreme anxiety, and the state of confusion she was in owing to this unjust aggression, were, no doubt, the reason of her not remarking the hackney-coaches stationed before the house, into one of which she might have got, and been driven in a few minutes into another county, when, in the event of her persecutors discovering her retreat, it would have been necessary for them to have procured a new writ before they could have again arrested her. But instead of adopting this very obvious course, and not, perhaps, imagining the fellows would be on the watch to see what became of her, she took refuge in a neighbouring house, the people belonging to which were known to her.

"In the meanwhile these infamous tyrants, by dint of kicking at the door of the room, succeeded in getting themselves released. They immediately made for the house which they had seen the countess enter,

and demanded of the owner that she should be surrendered up to them. The owner replied that he knew no such lady, and refused to allow them to make a search. They, however, insisted, declaring that if Madame de la Motte were not there, they would take upon themselves all the consequences of the trespass. Thereupon they proceeded to search the house. Not finding the object of their search on the ground or first-floors, they ascended to the second story, the proprietor following them and renewing his protestations. At last they arrived at a room, the door of which being locked they demanded to have it opened. In vain they were told that it was let to a lodger who always took his key with him when he went out; not doubting but that Madame de la Motte was concealed here, they threatened to burst the door open if the key were not immediately forthcoming.

"The countess, who was really in this room, had persuaded herself that a plot had been got up to carry her back to France, and there imprison her again. She was, consequently, in a most bewildered state. Opening the window, which looked into a yard, she got out and suspended herself by her hands to an iron bar which served as a guard, determined to precipitate herself to the ground if these fellows should succeed in breaking in the door. Unfortunately it was of common deal, and a

few kicks sufficed to start the panels. The instant the countess caught sight of the head of one of her pursuers she let go her hold and fell with violence upon the pavement. It was her misfortune not to have been killed on the spot: her thigh was broken in two places, her left arm was fractured, and one of her eyes was knocked out; in addition to which, her body was a mass of bruises. In this state she lived for several weeks, during which time I received from her a long letter giving me a detailed account of this tragical event.

"Thus died, at the age of thirty-four, a woman whose whole life was one long career of misery, but which might have ended happily had not the privilege of her birth, by over-exalting her imagination, developed beyond measure those sentiments of pride and ambition which conducted her to her fall." *

The editor of "The Life of Jean de St. Remy de Valois, heretofore Countess de la Motte, written by herself," furnished, in a supplement to that work, a few additional particulars of the melancholy termination of her career. He says, that "she received most of her injuries through falling against the trunk of a tree, and that, while the feelings of the surrounding spectators were agonized at the sight of the dreadful

* "Mémoires Inédits du Comte de la Motte," par L. Lacour, p. 190, *et seq.*

spectacle which her bleeding and mangled form presented, the sheriff's officer, with a disgraceful apathy, was only intent to maintain the legality of his caption, and refused to surrender the almost lifeless body until he had good bail for its security."*

Spite of the prominent place which the countess and her doings had recently occupied in the public mind, the journals of the day notified the fact of her decease in such brief terms as the following:

"August 26, 1791.—Died at her lodgings, near Astley's Riding School, Lambeth, the noted Countess de la Motte, of 'Necklace' memory, who lately jumped out of a two pair of stairs window, to avoid the bailiffs."†

Of the last surviving representative of the royal house of Valois, Mademoiselle de Saint-Remi, the countess's youngest sister, a few meagre particulars have been preserved. In Madame de la Motte's days of grandeur she was engaged to be married to a certain Paul François de Barras, nephew of the Count de Barras, and a particular friend of her brother's, the young Baron de Valois, but better known as commandant of the Convention forces against the Robes-

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. Supplement, p. 61.

† "Gentleman's Magazine," vol. lxi. p. 783.

pierre faction on the 9th Thermidor, as the friend and patron of young Buonaparte, and chief of the Directory. "My disaster," naïvely observes the countess, "prevented the nuptials."* In July, 1786, we find the Abbess of Jarcy, to which convent Mademoiselle de Saint-Remi had again retired, writing to the Baron de Breteuil on her behalf, and thanking him for the assistance which he had accorded to "virtue in distress." A couple of months afterwards, when this assistance required to be renewed, the baron is favoured with a second letter in the following terms:

"I consider my requests on behalf of Mademoiselle de Saint-Remi," writes the abbess, "founded as much on justice as on charity. The innumerable examples of the goodness of our monarchs in such cases authorizes my prayers. And although the example of a foreign sovereign ought not to influence the will of our august master, I do not see that it is wrong of me to dwell upon what the Emperor, brother of the best of queens, has just granted to the wife and children of Count de Székély, condemned to the pillory, the galleys, and other punishments. His goods were confiscated, and the sovereign gave them back to his wife and children. He did more: he preserved to them, even to the last

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. i. p 442. "Mémoires Inédits du Comte de la Motte," p. 322.

survivor, the perquisites which the culprit enjoyed as first lieutenant of the Hungarian *gardes nobles.*

"Is the position of Mademoiselle de Valois less deserving of pity? Alas! she deserves it much more. There remained some fortune to the Countess Székély, whereas our unfortunate is alone in the world. Lastly, she is of the blood of our kings—very respectable blood, M. le Baron, in the estimation of both you and I.

"Shall I tell you, M. le Baron—and why should I hide it any longer? Poison has twice failed to conduct the unhappy one to the tomb she longs for. Without the most prompt help—without the assistance of antidotes administered for twelve hours in succession, the unfortunate wretch would have expired in the most frightful torments: less frightful, however, than those which she is menaced with suffering without the alms which I claim for her, and which you cannot refuse—I do not hesitate to say it—to her extreme misfortunes."*

Exactly one year subsequently, namely, in September, 1787, we find a certain Abbé Phaph interesting himself very warmly in the young lady's affairs, and writing to the countess, who has only recently arrived in England, urging her to sign some document which he has prepared, the effect of which would be to give the sister a charge

* Autograph letter from Madame de Bracque, Abbess of Jarcy, in the collection of M. Feuillet de Conches.

upon the De la Motte property at Bar-sur-Aube. This the countess very decidedly declines to do, and writes back requesting her sister to send her over "three gowns which she fetched away from the mantua-maker's"* just after her arrest, and which she has ever since detained!

The next we hear of Mademoiselle de Saint-Remi is that she is living openly with the aforesaid abbé as his mistress.† In April, 1787, we find her engaged in a process against the domain for the restitution of the family papers and deeds of succession, which she stated were under the seals affixed to the effects of her sister; but orders having come from Versailles for all proceedings in the matter to be suspended, the suit had to be abandoned.‡ From this time we lose sight of Mademoiselle de Saint-Remi until January, 1794, the height of the Terror, when, caught up in the revolutionary vortex, she is sent to the Port Libre prison as a *suspect*. Here she is at first mistaken for her sister, until people call to mind that the countess has been dead some years.§ Six months afterwards she is transferred to the Carmes, and in less than another

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. ii. p. 377.

† "Mémoire Historique," etc., par Rétaux de Villette, p. 3.

‡ "Correspondance Secrète Inédite sur Louis XVI.," etc., vol. ii. p. 346.

§ "Lettres et Documents Inédits de Louis XVI. et Marie-Antoinette," vol. i. page 171.

month—namely, on the 22nd of August, three days before the arrest and execution of Robespierre—she has the good fortune to regain her liberty.* What subsequently became of her, and the precise date at which she died, are involved in some obscurity. Beugnot speaks of her as having retired to some convent in Germany,† and a paragraph in Comte de la Motte's "Mémoires" would lead us to suppose that her death took place about the year 1817.‡

But little is known of the future careers of the countess's two Accomplices, the forger Villette, and the counterfeit queen D'Oliva. Villette, on being banished from France, proceeded to gratify that longing which he pretended he had to visit Italy, where he seems to have lived for some years, apparently not caring to profit by the opportunity which the Revolution afforded him to return once more to the land of his birth. He published at Venice, in the year 1790, as his contribution to the lying literature of the Diamond Necklace affair, a small octavo volume, of less than one hundred pages, under the title of "Mémoire Historique des Intrigues de la Cour, et de se qui s'est passé entre la Reine, le Comte d'Artois, le Cardinal de Rohan,

* "Marie-Antoinette et le Procès du Collier," p. 23.

† "Mémoires du Comte Beugnot," vol. i. p. 6.

‡ See *post*, p. 257.

Madame de Polignac, Madame de la Motte, Cagliostro, etc."* In this work he informs us that he forged the queen's signature under the eyes of the cardinal—a prince who overawed him, and who had so many opportunities of benefiting him—and of Madame de la Motte, a woman whom he adored; a pension of six thousand francs a year being promised him for his compliance, of which he received, the following day, one thousand crowns on account. The words "*of France*," were added, he says, by the cardinal's express directions. Villette pretends that Cagliostro, the cardinal, and Madame de la Motte, were equally concerned in the plot; Cagliostro, whom at the trial he emphatically declared to be innocent of all share in the fraud, being the most guilty of all. The Necklace was obtained, he said, with the sole view of selling it, so that the trio might replenish their bankrupt exchequers, the cardinal having exhausted his resources in supplying Cagliostro with funds to carry on his experiments for the discovery of the philosopher's stone, which experiments they hoped might turn out successful by the time the Necklace had to be paid for. Villette pronounces all the "Mémoires" put forth at the time of

* Though it bears the imprint of Venice on the title page, this "Mémoire" was possibly a production of the unlicensed Paris press of the period.

the trial to be merely so many romances, fabricated for the sole purpose of concealing the truth. Of the countess's *liaisons* he speaks in the most open terms. "Abandoned," he says, "by her husband, a depraved libertine and gambler, she sought to captivate other men, and to render them slaves to her charms." What these charms were, Villette himself shall tell. "Strong natural wit, a graceful figure, a white and transparent skin, and eyes bright and piercing." He says that he possessed the countess's entire confidence, and knew of all her intrigues, and particularly her *liaisons* with the cardinal; he then proceeds to say that she was seduced in the first instance by the Marquis de Boulainvilliers, and that she afterwards admitted the Bishop of Langres to her embraces, that the Marquis d'Autichamp was her next lover, that she had a *liaison* with the Count d'Artois even, and reckoned the Count d'Olomieu and M. de Coigny on the list of those she had ensnared. "I have described her," concludes Villette, "as she was—amiable, pretty, and over-complaisant; too good not to have been a trifle weak, too passionate not to have been somewhat of a libertine. This woman, whom I loved to adoration, and who had loaded me with benefits, I dared to betray."

The termination of the career of Rétaux de Villette would appear to have been even a more sorry one than

that of the woman he so adored, if the statement is true that he died by the hands of the hangman, swung off on the leads of the Castle of Saint Angelo, at Rome.*

The Demoiselle d'Oliva married her old lover Beausire, the same who accompanied her to Brussels at the time of her flight. He was an offshoot of nobility, and, as we have already stated, was formerly attached to the household of the Count d'Artois. D'Oliva's married life was but brief, and anything but happy, for she died, it is reported, in 1789, in the greatest misery.† Next year her husband became commandant of the National guard of the Temple section, but finding his influence rapidly declining, he retired to Choissy, near Paris, and managed to get appointed procureur of the commune; finally he pursued the despicable calling of *mouton*, or informer, and drew up the lists of proscription in the Luxembourg prison, when it was choke full of persons *suspect*, against the majority of whom there was not a shadow of evidence, but as evidence must be forthcoming in some form or other, the poor wretches were accused of having plotted in prison. It was remarked that

* So stated by Carlyle in the rhapsodical prophecy which he puts into the mouth of Cagliostro, and which he subsequently says all turned out "literally true." See vol. iv. pp. 57, 60, of his Essays.

† "Lettres et Documents Inédits de Louis XVI. et Marie-Antoinette," par M. Feuillet de Conches, vol. i. p. 165.

Beausire's old acquaintances who had had the ill-luck to win money of him at play were certain to be on his list of victims, and it was said that he spoke privately to the public accuser to have them guillotined.* "This Plot in the Prison," remarks Carlyle, "is now the stereotype formula of Tinville; against whomsoever he knows no crime, this is a ready-made crime. His judgment-bar has become unspeakable, a recognized mockery, known only as the wicket one passes through towards death. His indictments are drawn out in blank; you insert the names after. He has his *moutons*, detestable traitor jackals, who report and bear witness, that they themselves may be allowed to live—for a time."†

Beausire was at the head of these *moutons*, was, in fact, the chief spy of the detestable Boyenval, who gloated over the number of victims he was instrumental in bringing to the guillotine. He said of Beausire, that he made use of him, but that Fouquier Tinville did not like him, and that he could have him guillotined whenever he pleased.‡ And it pleased Boyenval at last to put this covert threat of his into execution, and "D'Oliva's husband was hurled in."§

* "Mémoires sur les Prisons de Paris sous Robespierre," vol. ii. p. 88.

† Carlyle's French Revolution, Leipzig, vol. iii. p. 341.

‡ "Mémoires sur les Prisons de Paris," etc., vol. ii. p. 78.

§ Carlyle's Critical and Miscellaneous Essays, vol. iv. p. 58.

XLII.

1786–1793.

Dupe and Victim.

What became of the Dupe—Cardinal Prince Bishop Louis-Réné-Edouard de Rohan? Finding the bleak air of the Auvergne mountains sorely trying to his constitution, broken up by excesses and long confinement in the Bastille, the cardinal asked and obtained permission of the king to choose another place of residence. Either he or the Baron de Breteuil fixed upon the Abbey of St. Bénoît, on the Loire, near Orleans, but the lady superior of this establishment, alarmed at the prospect of the cardinal and his large retinue of servants coming there and eating them out of house and home, and then being, as was certain to be the case, very backward in his payments, protested that she was unable to afford the cardinal the necessary accommodation.* Eventually he was taken in at the Abbey of Marmontier, near Tours, where, we

* Autograph letters of the Abbess of St. Bénoît to the Baron de Breteuil, in the collection of M. Feuillet de Conches.

are told, he was ever lamenting the mad hopes in which he had permitted himself to indulge with regard to the queen, and the blind confidence he had reposed in Madame de la Motte.* Growing tired after a time of his new home, the cardinal made various efforts to obtain permission to return to his diocese, and even sent medical certificates to his old enemy, the Baron de Breteuil, setting forth that the air of his native Alsace was absolutely necessary to the restoration of his health. The king at last gave an unwilling consent, and for a time the cardinal lived in something like his old accustomed luxurious state at pleasant Saverne. On the approach of the Revolution he was nominated, by the influence of the popular party—who thought that his desire to be revenged upon the court would secure him to their side—a deputy of the clergy of Alsace. Being still under sentence of exile he did not dare accept the nomination, and a certain Abbé Louis was elected in his place. The abbé dying, the cardinal was again chosen, and the National Assembly having cancelled his sentence of exile, he came to Paris and took his seat. For a time he went with the revolutionary current, and even took the civic oath; but when his co-reformers began to meddle with the property of the clergy, decreeing the

* "Marie-Antoinette et le Procès du Collier," par E. Campardon, p. 156, *note*.

sale of their lands and superfluous edifices, he cut himself adrift from them, and retired once more to his loved Saverne, to dream, however, no more mad dreams of love and ambition while pacing up and down his once-favourite "Promenade de la Rose."

Any mere wordy formula the cardinal was willing enough to swallow, but he could not tolerate sacrilegious hands being laid upon church property, and particularly church property that he was interested in. "Messieurs of the clergy," said a wag of the time, "it is your turn to be shaved; if you wriggle too much you will be certain to get cut;" and cut the cardinal, and not only the cardinal, but with him the unfortunate crown jewellers, certainly did get, for their security on the rich revenues of the Abbey of St. Waast, of which the nation had taken possession, was now only so much waste paper, and bankruptcy was the result. Shortly after the grand national oath-taking ceremony in the Champ de Mars, the cardinal was summoned by the Assembly to resume his functions as deputy within fifteen days, but instead of doing so, he wrote a letter, stating that as it was impossible for him to give his adhesion to the new civil constitution of the clergy, he placed his seat at the Assembly's disposal. The cardinal was now looked upon as one "*suspect*," and had ere long to retire to Ettenheim, a dependency of his Strasbourg

bishopric, lying beyond the French frontier on the opposite bank of the Rhine. Here, in his capacity of prince of the German empire, he caused levies of troops to be made to swell the army under the command of his relative, the Prince de Condé, whom he aided in every possible way. These proceedings of his greatly exasperated the revolutionary party; he was constantly being denounced in the National Assembly, and on one occasion Victor de Broglie brought forward a proposition to indict him before the national high court; but the Assembly, knowing the cardinal to be beyond its reach, sensibly enough refused to entertain the proposal, although it was renewed again and again. It contented itself, on first hearing of the cardinal's flight, with instructing the municipality of Strasbourg to seize and make an inventory of his effects, of which they were to retain custody until further orders.* "Deprived of his vast revenues," says the cardinal's biographer, "he lived a modest and frugal life, intent only on securing the happiness of his diocese, now reduced to a small patch of territory on the right bank of the Rhine."† This life of virtuous restraint which the old spendthrift and *debauché*, stripped of his fat benefices, was com-

* "Correspondance Secrète Inédite sur Louis XVI.," etc., vol. ii. p. 463.

† Biographie Universelle; art. de Rohan.

pelled to lead in his declining years, was perhaps as severe a punishment as could have been meted out to him. He died on the 16th of February, 1803, having attained an age only a little more than a year short of the allotted three score years and ten.

The cardinal and his "familiar" do not appear to have met again on this side of the grave. Cagliostro, as we have seen, had to make a rapid retreat to England, and here he remained for about a couple of years. Then he went to Switzerland, next to Savoy, and finally to several of the chief cities of Italy. On December 27th, 1789, when the proceedings of the revolutionary party in France were exciting the utmost alarm in the minds of members of the sacred college, Cagliostro had the ill-luck to get arrested, denounced, it is said, by his wife as chief of a society of Illuminati. He was confined in the Castle of St. Angelo, and after fifteen months detention, was found guilty of practising freemasonry, and sentenced to death, which sentence was commuted to perpetual imprisonment in the Castle of St. Leon, where he is believed to have died in 1795. His wife was condemned to a life of religious seclusion in the Convent of St. Apolline.*

And what became of the Victim?—the Austrian she-

* Biographie Universelle; art. Cagliostro.

wolf!—the Austrian tigress!—the Iscariot of France! Messalina, Brunehaut, Frédégonde, and Médicis! as she was indifferently called by her relentless persecutors? A more powerful pen than our own shall record her cruel fate:—

"On Monday, the 14th of October, 1793, a cause is pending in the Palais de Justice, in the new Revolutionary Court, such as these old stone walls never witnessed—the trial of Marie-Antoinette. The once brightest of queens, now tarnished, defaced, forsaken, stands here before Fouquier Tinville's judgment-bar, answering for her life. The indictment was delivered her last night.* To such changes of human fortune what words are adequate? Silence alone is adequate.

"There are few printed things one meets with of such tragic, almost ghastly, significance as those bald pages of the *Bulletin du Tribunal Révolutionnaire*, which bear title 'Trial of the Widow Capet.' . . . The very witnesses summoned are like ghosts: exculpatory, inculpatory, they themselves are all hovering over death and doom; they are known, in our imaginations, as the prey of the guillotine. Tall, *ci-devant* Count d'Estaing, anxious to show himself patriot, cannot escape; nor Bailly, who, when asked if he knows the accused, an-

* "Procès de la Reine" (Deux Amis), vol. xi. pp. 251, 381.

swers, with a reverent inclination towards her, 'Ah, yes! I know madame.' Ex-patriots are here sharply dealt with, as Procureur Manuel; ex-ministers shorn of their splendour. We have cold aristocratic impassivity, faithful to itself even in Tartarus; rabid stupidity of patriot corporals — patriot washerwomen — who have much to say of plots, treasons, August tenth, old insurrection of women,—for all now has become a crime in her who has *lost*.

"Marie-Antoinette, in this her utter abandonment and hour of extreme need, is not wanting to herself, the imperial woman. Her look, they say, as that hideous indictment was reading, continued calm; 'she was sometimes observed moving her fingers as when one plays on the piano.' You discern, not without interest, across that dim revolutionary bulletin itself, how she bears herself queen-like. Her answers are prompt, clear, often of laconic brevity; resolution, which has grown contemptuous without ceasing to be dignified, veils itself in calm words. 'You persist, then, in denial?' 'My plan is not denial: it is the truth I have said, and I persist in that.' Scandalous Hébert has borne his testimony as to many things—as to one thing concerning Marie-Antoinette and her little son, wherewith human speech had better not further be soiled. She has answered Hébert; a juryman begs

to observe that she has not answered as to *this*. 'I have not answered,' she exclaims with noble emotion, 'because nature refuses to answer such a charge brought against a mother. I appeal to all the mothers that are here.' Robespierre, when he heard of it, broke out into something almost like swearing at the brutish block-headism of this Hébert,* on whose foul head his foul lie has recoiled. At four o'clock on Wednesday morning, after two days and two nights of interrogating, jury-charging, and other darkening of counsel, the result comes out: sentence of Death! 'Have you anything to say?' The Accused shook her head, without speech. Night's candles are burning out; and with her, too, time is finishing, and it will be Eternity and Day. This Hall of Tinville's is dark, ill-lighted, except where she stands. Silently she withdraws from it, to die.

"Two processions, or royal progresses, three and twenty years apart, have often struck us with a strange feeling of contrast. The first is of a beautiful arch-duchess and dauphiness, quitting her mother's city, at the age of Fifteen, towards hopes such as no other Daughter of Eve then had. 'On the morrow,' says Weber, an eye-witness, 'the Dauphiness left Vienna.

* "Villate, Causes Sècretes de la Révolution de Thermidor," p. 179.

The whole city crowded out, at first with a sorrow which was silent. She appeared: you saw her sunk back into her carriage, her face bathed in tears; hiding her eyes now with her handkerchief, now with her hands; several times putting out her head to see yet again this Palace of her Fathers, whither she was to return no more. She motioned her regret, her gratitude to the good Nation which was crowding here to bid her farewell. Then arose not only tears, but piercing cries, on all sides. Men and women alike abandoned themselves to such expression of their sorrow. It was an audible sound of wail in the streets and avenues of Vienna. The last courier that followed her disappeared, and the crowd melted away.'*

"The young imperial maiden of fifteen has now become a worn, discrowned widow of thirty-eight, gray before her time. This is the last procession: 'Few minutes after the trial ended, the drums were beating to arms in all sections. At sunrise the armed force was on foot, cannons getting placed at the extremities of the bridges, in the squares, crossways, all along from the Palais de Justice to the Place de la Révolution. By ten o'clock numerous patrols were circulating in the streets; thirty thousand foot and horse drawn up under

* Weber's "Mémoires concernant Marie-Antoinette," vol. i. p. 6.

arms. At eleven Marie-Antoinette was brought out. She had on an undress of *piqué blanc*. She was led to the place of execution in the same manner as an ordinary criminal, bound on a cart, accompanied by a constitutional priest in lay dress, escorted by numerous detachments of infantry and cavalry. These and the double row of troops all along her road she appeared to regard with indifference. On her countenance there was visible neither abashment nor pride. To the cries of *Vive la République* and *Down with Tyranny*, which attended her all the way, she seemed to pay no heed. She spoke little to her confessor. The tricolour streamers on the house-tops occupied her attention in the streets du Roule and Saint-Honoré; she also noticed the inscriptions on the house fronts. On reaching the Place de la Révolution, her looks turned towards the *Jardin National*, whilom Tuileries; her face at that moment gave signs of lively emotion. She mounted the scaffold with courage enough. At a quarter past twelve her head fell; the executioner showed it to the people amid universal, long-continued cries of *Vive la République.*" *

And this was the fate reserved for her of whom Burke

* "Deux Amis," vol. xi. p. 301. Carlyle's "French Revolution," Leipzig, vol. iii. pp. 244-7.

had said that he thought "ten thousand swords would have leapt from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult;"—who, on her first entry into Paris, was welcomed by a wild sea of human beings, that surged along her line of route and filled the vast space of the Place du Carrousel;—the fair young dauphiness, to whom, as she looked forth from the gallery of the Tuileries upon the swaying mass beneath, the old Duke de Brissac gallantly said, "Madame, you have under your eyes two hundred thousand lovers;"—the young queen who, when called upon to share her husband's throne, with mixed feelings of gratitude and pride wrote thus respecting her adopted country to her mother:

"Though God caused me to be born in the rank I now occupy, I cannot but admire the order of His providence which has selected me, the last of your children, for the finest realm in Europe. I feel more than ever how much I owe to the tenderness of my august mother, who took so much pains and care to procure for me this great establishment."*

"Beautiful Highborn that wert so foully hurled low! . . . Oh! is there a man's heart that

* "Maria-Theresia und Marie-Antoinette," von A. Ritter von Arneth, p. 107.

thinks, without pity, of those long months and years of slow wasting ignominy: of thy Birth, soft-cradled in Imperial Schönbrunn, the winds of heaven not to visit thy face too roughly, thy foot to light on softness, thy eye on splendour; and then of thy Death, or hundred Deaths, to which the Guillotine and Fouquier Tinville's judgment-bar was but the merciful end? Look *there*, O man born of woman! The bloom of that fair face is wasted; the hair is grey with care; the brightness of those eyes is quenched, their lids hang drooping; the face is stony pale, as of one living in death. Mean weeds, which her own hand has mended, attire the Queen of the World. The death-hurdle, where thou sittest pale, motionless, which only curses environ, has to stop: a people, drunk with vengeance, will drink it again in full draught, looking at thee there! Far as the eye reaches, a multitudinous sea of maniac heads; the air deaf with their triumph-yell! The Living-dead must shudder with yet one other pang; her startled blood yet again suffuses with the hue of agony that pale face, which she hides with her hands. There is *no* heart to say, God pity thee! O think not of these; think of HIM whom thou worshippest, the Crucified,—who, also treading the wine-press *alone*, fronted sorrow still deeper; and triumphed over it, and made it holy; and built of it a 'Sanctuary of

Sorrow,' for thee and all the wretched! Thy path of thorns is nigh ended. One long last look at the Tuileries, where thy step was once so light—where thy children shall not dwell. The head is on the block: the axe rushes—dumb lies the World. That wild-yelling World, and all its madness, is behind thee!

"Beautiful Highborn that wert so foully hurled low! . . . *Thy* fault in the French Revolution, was that thou wert the Symbol of the Sin and Misery of a thousand years; that with Saint Bartholomews, and Jacqueries, with Gabelles, and Dragonades, and Parcs-aux-cerfs, the heart of mankind was filled full, and foamed over in all-involving madness. To no Napoleon, to no Cromwell wert thou wedded: such sit not in the highest rank, of themselves; are raised on high by the shaking and confounding of all the ranks! As poor peasants, how happy, worthy had ye two been! But by evil destiny ye were made a King and a Queen of; and so both once more are become an astonishment and a by-word to all times."*

* Carlyle's "Critical and Miscellaneous Essays," vol. iv. pp. 30, 31.

XLIII.

1792—1831.

"NESTOR DE LA MOTTE."—GREEN OLD AGE.

COUNT DE LA MOTTE survived all the actors in the Necklace drama, and lived to see France once more in the throes of a Revolution and the Bourbons again dethroned—lived in fact, to the commencement of our own era, and heard of, if he did not see, steam-vessels daily crossing the Channel, and railways carrying passengers upwards of twenty miles an hour.

We left the count pursuing his second appeal with reference to the Necklace process. He had not long to wait for a decision, for we find that on July 27, 1792, the first tribunal gave judgment "on the appeal lodged by Marc-Nicolas la Motte from the judgment given against him on the 5th of April last by the third tribunal established at the Palais de Justice" in the following terms:—

"Whereas the complaint remitted by the procureur-général to the former Parliament of Paris on Sep-

tember 7, 1785, is only signed at the end and not on each sheet, which is contrary to law, the present appeal is annulled, together with the judgment given by the former Parliament of Paris on December 5, 1785.

"Nevertheless, having regard to the gravity of the offence, it is ordered that the said La Motte shall remain in custody, and that the documents in the suit shall be hereunto annexed to serve as a record of the proceedings, and that the same shall be brought before the director of the jury to decide upon as he may be advised."*

The count pretends that in the first instance the judgment said nothing whatever about his remaining in custody, and that it was only on the Jacobin public accuser (?) rising and stating that as no notice had been taken during the proceedings of the letters patent issued by the king, he opposed the count's being set at liberty, that the unpleasant addendum was made. According to the count, the king at once offered to withdraw the letters patent, but was overruled by the minister. In a few days it was too late; Louis XVI. was dethroned and a prisoner at the Temple, his own keeper of the seals, Duport du Tertre, sealing with the great seal the order for his arrest.

About this time poor M. de Laporte is also arrested

* *Moniteur* for 1792, No. 220.

and sent to join the count in the Conciergerie, and in a week or two, after a swift trial before the newly constituted tribunal of August 17th, the harmless old man is sent to the guillotine. Swiftly as the new tribunal does its work with the *suspects*, and swiftly as the newly invented guillotine seconds it, still it is not sharp enough for revolutionary patriotism, with Verdun fallen and the Duke of Brunswick in full march upon the capital. By Marat and Billaud, and Sergent and Panis and some few others, the hideous September massacres are planned, and De la Motte is horrified at learning that his name, with the fatal red cross against it, stands second on the list of prescribed prisoners in the Conciergerie. The count pretends that he and a party of fellow-prisoners secretly arm themselves and decide upon making a desperate resistance, though where they got their weapons from is by no means clear. According to his own version, he is provided with a dagger and a couple of pistols, and takes up his post at the grating at the end of the corridor, where he remains on the watch, and from whence, not only did he see the prisoners tried, but slaughtered as well. Throughout the night nothing is heard but the unlocking of doors and drawing of bolts, followed by shouts, shrieks, and groans; and an hour or so before daybreak comes the sound of heavy footsteps, of loud voices demanding the keys, and sharp blows against the

door at the entrance to the corridor leading to their cells. All at once the count hears his own name shouted out, and thinks the time has now come to battle for his life. A few more blows and the door gives way, and a band of strangers rushes in—friends, however, and not enemies, who caress the count, clasp him to their breasts, and carry him triumphantly in their arms. The outside of the prison gained, they entertain him at a neighbouring café, and then summoning a voiture, three of his liberators accompany him to the Rue de Choiseul, where they insist upon his going and at once making his demand upon the "domain" for the entire value of his effects seized at Bar-sur-Aube in virtue of the sentence passed upon him by the Parliament of Paris.

The count of course does as he is bid, and what is most surprising, according to his own statement, without previous notice or proving his identity, or even the shadow of a legal claim, he succeeds in obtaining from the "domain" a sum of thirty thousand francs on account, twenty-seven thousand francs of which he stows away in his pocket-book, and the remaining three thousand, which are in assignats, he hands to his deliverers to dispose of as they may think proper.*

It was lucky for the count that he had been transferred

* "Mémoires Inédits du Comte de la Motte," pp. 254—282.

to the Conciergerie, for at the time the foregoing scenes were being played out in this prison, here is what was going on at La Force, the prison where the count was originally confined. "At one o'clock in the morning of September 3rd," writes Maton de la Varenne* the gate leading to our quarter was again opened. Four men in uniform, each with a drawn sabre and blazing torch, mounted our corridor, preceeded by a turnkey, and entered a room close to ours to search a box which we heard them break open. This done, they halted in the gallery and began questioning one Cuissa to know where La Motte was. La Motte, they said, under a pretext of finding a treasure which they were to share in, had swindled one of them out of three hundred livres, having asked him to dinner for that purpose. The wretched Cuissa, whom they had in their power, and who lost his life that night, answered trembling that he remembered the circumstance well, but did not know what had become of La Motte. Determined to find La Motte and confront him with Cuissa, they ascended to other rooms and made further search there, but evidently without success, for I heard them say, "Let's look among the corpses then, for in God's name he must be found!'"

The count had not long regained his liberty before he

* "Les Crimes de Marat et des autres égorgeurs, ou, Ma Résurrection," par P. A. L. Maton de la Varenne, pp. 67-8.

was discovered by his niece, daughter of Madame de la Tour, she who as a child had taken part in the famous incantation scene enacted by Cagliostro at the Palais-Cardinal, and of which the countess made so much at the Necklace trial. The game of appealing and petitioning being now up, and it being the duty of all patriots to hurl back foreign invasion, Count de la Motte returns to his old profession of arms, raises a company of cavalry, composed chiefly of former friends in the gendarmerie, gets appointed captain, has his troop reviewed by the colonel on the Boulevards, and next day finds himself denounced by patriot Burlaindeux, who charges him with being both royalist and aristocrat, and swears that the company he has joined is composed entirely of men of his own stamp, with not a single *sans-culotte* among them. The count not desiring to return to his old quarters in the Conciergerie—for with Danton as minister of justice, again in the Conciergerie the chances are that he would only leave it for the guillotine—is glad enough to return his sword to its scabbard, and accept a passport for his native town of Bar-sur-Aube.

On his arrival there he finds the great pavilion attached to his house occupied by the provincial directory, which necessitates his furnishing a few rooms in the house itself for his own accommodation. Having done this, he proceeds to Tonnerre to fetch his sister

and niece, who have taken up their residence there. At Tonnerre the count stays for several weeks, smitten with the charms, or possibly the expectations, of a young lady, only daughter of a rich proprietor. "I was thirty-six," remarks he—he was upwards of thirty-eight—"but I did not look so old; she was eighteen." The count finding himself favoured in his suit, asks the hand of mademoiselle in marriage, and is accepted.

Time passes pleasantly enough for the next month or two; the count is installed in the old house at Bar-sur-Aube, and has his sister and niece residing with him. The shooting season is on, and give the count his dog and his gun and he will not lack for amusement. Of course he makes frequent journeys to Tonnerre, although something like fifty miles of cross roads intervene between the two places; but what are these to a man in love, who has been accustomed to the saddle too all his life? How he manages to live at this time he does not condescend to tell us. There are no more sealed packages of francs from poor old Laporte. Was it on the balance of the assignats which he received from the domain?—if he ever did receive what he states—or was it upon his sister, Madame de la Tour? We think the latter the most probable. M. de la Tour had emigrated, and the count's anxiety that his sister should live with him arose, we expect, from his desire to live on her.

It is at this time, November, 1792, that the king is brought to trial; the count is nervously anxious for news of the result of the proceedings, simply because, as he admits, he still entertained some faint hopes of being able to obtain a further supply of cash from the dethroned monarch. Louis XVI. dead, the count is reduced to his shadowy claim on the domain.

During the next eighteen months, De la Motte leads the life of a country gentleman at Bar-sur-Aube. He hunts, and shoots, and fishes, and cultivates his little plot of land, and rides constantly over to Tonnerre. The queen is now brought to trial, and he is appealed to, he says, to come to Paris and depose against her, but declined to do so. "In my opinion," observes this contemptible hypocrite, professing to believe in his wife's pretended intimacy with Marie-Antoinette, "the queen was not so blameable (in the Necklace affair) as Madame de la Motte believed. In her position it was difficult to interfere between the law and its victim. I was persuaded this sacrifice had cost the queen much, and I had had proofs of the goodness of her heart."* In May, 1794, the count proceeds to Paris to urge his claim against the domain, which claim of his has now become as much his fixed idea as the revision of his

* "Mémoires Inédits du Comte de la Motte," pp. 286—302.

sentence in the Necklace process was a year or two ago. He met, however, with no success; and after two months spent in wearying appeals, returns home again, balked in all his plans, and thoroughly disgusted, to find that Bar-sur-Aube has now its revolutionary committee and its denouncers of *suspects*, and is by no means a secure place to reside in. Tonnerre, he thinks, will be more preferable, so to Tonnerre he hies, but only to find that it also has its denouncers. The count hastens home again, and finds his sister and niece already arrested as the wife and daughter of an *émigré;* thinking his turn will not be long in coming, he keeps his horse ready saddled in his stable, puts a pair of pistols in the holsters, and prepares to ride away at the first signal of danger.

With the view of keeping in with the revolutionary party, the count gives a supper to the members of the committee, after which proof of patriotism they grant him a certificate of citizenship in proper form. Protected by this, he returns to Tonnerre, and proceeds to take the necessary steps for his marriage. But the municipality will not permit the banns to be published until the count produces a certificate of the countess's death, and this, owing to the war with England, he is unable to procure. Back to Bar-sur-Aube the count rides again, and obtains such certificate as he can from the authorities there—his uncle, M. de Suremont, the

same that had to disgorge the jewels belonging to the count which he had appropriated—being mayor at the time. Ere, however, the count can return to Tonnerre he is arrested by order of a government commissioner, and carried off by a couple of *militaires* to Troyes, to the same prison where his sister and niece are already confined. Here the time seems to have passed pleasantly enough with music, singing, reading of plays and flirtations between the male and female prisoners. Among the latter is the "wife of an *émigré*, with a charming daughter of eighteen"—eighteen seems to have been an irresistible age with the count. "Not having," says he, in the coolest manner, "any further relations with the people of Tonnerre"—although he was about setting out to his wedding at the very time he was arrested —"I decided upon marrying this young person."

Fortunately for the count, Robespierre's fall takes place at this period, and he and his fellow-prisoners regain their liberty. On returning to Bar-sur-Aube he finds that all his arms and horses have been appropriated by the officers who arrested him, and that they and his servants between them have pretty well stripped his house. He at once institutes proceedings in the local courts, obtains a judgment by default, and the two *militaires* are cast in damages for fifty thousand francs, which damages the count of course hopes to get some

day or other. At any rate, thenceforward these fifty thousand francs become his fixed idea, and we hear no more of his claim against the domain.

The count, being sadly in need of ready cash, sells his house—that house on which so large a portion of the proceeds from the sale of the famous Necklace had been squandered, to the postmaster of Bar-sur-Aube. The commodious stables serve admirably for the postmaster's stud of horses, the elegantly decorated *salons*, and *chambres à coucher* furnish handsome reception and sleeping rooms for his guests. The great pavilion is reserved for the count's own use for the space of a year; and here he, his wife—for he has married the charming young lady of eighteen—and his mother-in-law, for a time reside. At the commencement of 1796 they remove to what the count describes as a charming hermitage, surrounded by woods and waterfalls and lovely views, and where they farm their own land, and live a life of country ease. Several years—happy ones after a fashion, one would suppose—thus glide by, until at length the count's mother-in-law, weary of the woods and the waterfalls and the charming views, urges him to go to Paris. Horses, bullocks, cows, pigs, poultry, and standing crops are forthwith sold, and to Paris the family betake themselves. Bonaparte is now first consul; the count obtains an audience of him, presents a

petition, and is told by the great man that he remembers seeing him years ago at Brienne. Nothing, however, comes of the petition, and spite of all his efforts the count cannot find the two officers against whom he has the judgment for fifty thousand francs. For some years he seems to live in Paris agreeably enough—no doubt on the resources of his mother-in-law—spending his time between the Palais Royal and the Boulevards, and ever on the look-out for the two *militaires* who plundered his house at Bar-sur-Aube. At last, by a lucky chance, he tracks out one of them, has him arrested, and after various legal proceedings, is disgusted at seeing him set at liberty on the ground that the government had granted a general amnesty for all acts done in service of the state at this period of national trouble.

Year after year rolls by, and the count witnesses the establishment of the Empire, the fall of Napoleon, his consignment to the Isle of Elba, and the return of the Bourbons to France, to bring about which last event he pretends he took most energetic steps. Beugnot, whom the reader will remember as the young barrister of Bar-sur-Aube, and who has managed to keep his head upon his shoulders during the revolutionary whirl, finds himself appointed minister of police, having already had the title of count conferred upon him by Napoleon. De la Motte loses not a moment in appealing to his

former rival to serve an old friend and fellow-townsman, and Beugnot knowing perfectly well the count's tastes, and precisely what he is fitted for, gets the farmer of the gambling tables in the Palais Royal—the leases of which Beugnot, in his capacity of police minister, had to renew—to give him some congenial berth. The count pretends that it was simply a pension of two hundred francs a month which he received from Bernard, the lessee of the gambling saloons, and that he accepted this with great repugnance. It is far more probable that he had to do something for his paltry pittance—act, for example, as decoy duck, and entice all the game he could to fowler Bernard's net. Whichever it may have been, post or pension simply, the count lost it before a year was over, when Napoleon was again ruler of France.

At the second return of the Bourbons after the battle of Waterloo, Count Beugnot is named postmaster-general. De la Motte again seeks him out, and obtains a letter from him to Bernard, who reinstates him in his former position, and such as it was, the count manages to hold it for a couple of years or so, when he gets his dismissal. Of course he flies off to complain to Beugnot, but Beugnot can do nothing for him; he however promises to see if he can serve the count in some other way. Eventually he appoints the count's sister, Madame de la Tour, post-

mistress at Bar-sur-Aube, but to the count himself he gives no sort of place.

"At this epoch" (1817), writes the count, in dolorous strain, "I had just lost successively my sister-in-law (Mademoiselle de Saint-Remi), my wife, and my mother-in-law. My son, aged fifteen, had determined upon proceeding to Guadaloupe with the first battalion ordered to that colony. I was therefore alone in the world, without consolation, without help, without even the means of existence. Sent away from one hotel after another through default of payment, humiliated at being obliged to receive from my acquaintances the smallest pittance, that too frequently proved insufficient for my most pressing wants, I felt my courage forsake me, and all I thought of was putting an end to a life of so much misery."*

Being without the means of procuring a pistol, the count informs us that he resolved on throwing himself into the Seine. Instead, however, of doing this from one of the quays, or from the banks of the river in the immediate suburbs, he makes a long country journey to Franconville-la-Garenne, several miles away from the Seine at its nearest point. This gives him opportunity for reflection, and he abandons his suicidal intentions

* "Mémoires Inédits du Comte de la Motte," pp. 303—362.

and returns to Paris determined to present a petition to the king. It is curious to find the count in his old age returning to the old De la Motte de Valois practice of memorializing the crown. Times, however, had changed, and there were too many petitioners with real grievances pressing their claims upon the Bourbons for any of the De la Motte de Valois kith or kin to stand a shadow of a chance. As luck would have it, when the count reached Paris, after a tramp of at least twenty miles, he encountered a friend who gave him a good breakfast, and made him some fair promises which put him in spirits again. He now prepares his petition, and sends it to Marshal Beurnonville with a letter for the Duke de la Châtre. In a few days the count receives a reply. The duke has forwarded his petition to his majesty, who has remitted it, accompanied by a recommendation of his own, to the minister of his household. The count rubs his hands at this good news, and anxiously waits for further intelligence. At last a friend undertakes to make inquiries for him at the ministerial bureau, and learns, *sacré Dieu!* that all petitions accompanied by special recommendations from the king are stowed away in pigeon holes on their receipt, and are never seen or heard of more. The count hastens to the marshal in a frantic state of mind; the marshal does what he can to pacify him, and, as a matter of course,

exhorts him to be patient. Patient! poor comfort this to a man reduced "to live upon horse-beans and boiled potatoes without seasoning, and rarely tasting even bread,"* and whose span of life is well nigh drawn out to the allotted threescore years and ten.

The count, in his depth of misery, again resolves upon suicide, and again sets forth on a long journey before executing his purpose. When night sets in he is almost twenty miles from Paris. Selecting a favourable spot, the old man proceeds to put his design in execution. First of all he ties up his pocket-book, containing the letters of the duke and the marshal, in his handkerchief, to which he attaches a heavy stone or two, and then sinks it in the stream. He next flings in his hat and cane, and prepares to follow them, but his courage forsakes him. Even at well nigh threescore and ten the love of life proves too strong. In the dark waters before him the count sees, he says, only waves of blood, and suddenly visions of the hideous night of September 2nd rise vividly before his eyes. Rushing from the river's brink he gains a meadow, where he lays himself down and sleeps. On awaking he walks for upwards of a couple of hours in the direction of Paris, and eventually finds himself on the road to Choissy. Seeing a light in one of the houses

* "Mémoires Inédits du Comte de la Motte," p. 365.

of the village he makes for it, and fortunately finds a man stirring, of whom he begs a draught of water, telling him that he has been attacked and robbed by thieves. The man, compassionating his miserable appearance, gives him a glass of wine instead, and a stout stick to help him forward on the road, and after a brief rest the count resumes his journey. He goes again to his old friend, the same who gave him the breakfast on his return from a similar expedition, tells him of his second adventure, and is again relieved by him.

After having allowed his process against the two *militaires* to slumber for some years, the count revives it again, and applies to a matrimonial agent to take it up, but it being quite out of this man's line of business, he, on the tanner's principle of there being nothing like leather, suggests matrimony to the count as the best way of surmounting his misfortunes—informs him that he has an old dowager on his books who is mad to marry one of the *ancien régime*. The count is nothing loth; so an interview is arranged, and an invitation to dinner follows; and the count, got up for the occasion, presents himself at the old lady's house, of which he already looks forward to being master. He is shocked, however, at the number of children and grandchildren he is introduced to, and still more shocked at the want of manners of the little brats, and especially at an

episode which transpires at the dinner-table, and which delicacy will not permit us to describe. The dinner, which was of the noisiest, in due course comes to an end, and with it the count's brief courtship of the dowager who was mad to marry a man of the *ancien régime.*

For a year or two longer the old count drags on a miserable existence. He succeeds in getting a lawyer to take up his case against the two officers, and obtains from him an advance of five hundred francs. Five hundred francs! why the old count must have been as delighted as he was in the old days when he came over from England with drafts on Perregaux for between two and three hundred times five hundred francs. This slice of luck puts him once more in clover for a time, but only for a time, for although the case prospers at the outset, it is finally given against him, and starvation again stares him in the face. At this moment a dislocated limb forces the wretched old man to take refuge in the Hôpital de la Charité, and here he remains for many weary months. "It was while I was in this hospital," says the count, "that M. Panisset came to see me, and found me on my bed of suffering, and made me certain proposals on the part of M. de Lavan, prefect of police." *

* "Mémoires Inédits du Comte de la Motte," p. 375.

When the count was sufficiently recovered to come abroad, his first visit was to M. de Lavan, at the prefecture. "In 1825," says M. Feuillet de Conches, "a man bowed down by age and misery presented himself at M. de Lavan's bureau, and was received by the chief of his cabinet, a person of rare merit and distinguished character, M. Duplessis. It was Count de la Motte, who came to ask bread. M. Duplessis conversed with him respecting the Necklace affair, and suggested that he should write his memoirs, including his reminiscences of this mysterious incident. La Motte thereupon wrote what was suggested, and with every appearance of good faith. His notes only confirmed the details which were already known. The queen's memory had no need of being cleared by a poor broken-down wretch who, after having helped to cast dirt upon her august fame by contributing to the atrocious calumnies of his wife, now came forward to deny them under the stroke of misery, in presence of a royalist government. Still it was no less precious to have an authentic denial written by one of the principal actors in this too famous drama, an old man, worn down by misfortune, but retaining all his intelligence, understanding the character of the atonement, and accepting it, according to the opinion of M. Duplessis, with resignation and good faith. Out of respect to memories, become almost saint-like; out of

respect, above all, to the daughter of Louis XVI., to whom the resuscitation of the name of La Motte, upon which evil-disposed people would have been certain to comment, would have been the cause of considerable grief, M. de Lavan thought it best to envelop in obscurity the few days this unfortunate being had still to live." *

"The pretensions of M. de la Motte," remarks M. Campardon, "were exceedingly modest. All he asked was an annuity of from three hundred to four hundred francs for life, and his admission into the Hospice de Chaillot." During the last years of his existence, the count, who was commonly known by the nickname of "Valois-Collier," † is said to have taken his daily stroll beneath the famous "Galeries de Bois" of the Palais Royal, which stood where the present handsome Galerie d'Orléans now stands, and were derisively styled the Tartar's Camp. To the very last, therefore, he affected the neighbourhood of his old haunts, the gambling saloons of the Palais Royal. Overwhelmed by infirmity and misery, he died in the month of November, 1831, having almost attained his eightieth year. ‡

* "Lettres et Documents Inédits de Louis XVI. et Marie-Antoinette," vol. i. p. 176.

† "Journal de Paris," Nov. 12, 1831.

‡ "Marie-Antoinette et le Procès du Collier," par E. Campardon, p. 200.

XLIV.

1786—1866.

THE CROWN-JEWELLERS.—THE END OF THE NECKLACE CASE.—HISTORY AGAIN REPEATS ITSELF.

To render our narrative complete, it is necessary we should inform the reader how it fared with the crown jewellers—Böhmer and Bassenge, "Au Grand Balcon," Rue Vendôme—and what was the final upshot of the famous Necklace case. In the first place, the jewellers never received a single *sou* of the rich revenues of the abbey of Saint Waast, computed to produce 300,000 francs a year, and which really did yield 225,000 francs, which had been assigned to them. Among their many creditors was M. Nicolas Deville, the king's secretary, to whom they owed 900,602 francs, and to whom they re-assigned the aforesaid revenues for the liquidation of their debt; but unfortunately the Revolution came, and with it the sale of the property of

the church for the benefit of the nation, and M. Nicolas Deville in his turn did not receive a *sou*. Meanwhile, Böhmer and Bassenge became bankrupt. The Cardinal de Rohan at his death left behind him a will by which he appointed the Princess Charlotte de Rohan-Rochefort his residuary legatee, and she accepted administration of the estate on condition that she should not be held responsible to the creditors for any deficiency that might exist. At the time of his decease the cardinal possessed landed property in Baden, and personal property to a considerable amount, part of which was money lent to his relatives, the Prince and Princess de Guéménée, and the Duke de Montbazon, which the princess neglected to recover, and it was consequently lost. The princess sold the lands in Baden, and divided the proceeds among a few favoured creditors, but Deville obtained little or nothing. After the Restoration, when the property remaining unsold was returned to its former owners or their heirs, and an indemnity was also granted for what had been sold, the princess, it is said, neglected the interests of the creditors by omitting to recover the sums due to the cardinal's estate, especially those owing from the Guéménée family.

For this evident neglect of her duty as executrix, it was maintained that the princess was responsible in

the persons of her heirs, notwithstanding the conditions under which she had undertaken to administer the cardinal's will. In accordance with this view, so recently as the year 1864 an action was brought before the Civil Tribunal of the Seine by the heirs of M. Deville against the Princes de Rohan-Rochefort, as representatives of the Princess Charlotte de Rohan-Rochefort, to recover the principal sum for which the assignment of the Saint Waast revenues had been given, together with cumulative interest, amounting in the whole to upwards of 2,000,000 francs; but it was argued for the defence that the cardinal's estate had been properly administered by the princess, that the plaintiffs had received the same share as the other creditors, and that they had no legal claim on the defendants. The tribunal took this view of the case, and accordingly rejected the plaintiff's demand with costs. Such was the end, after the lapse of nearly four score years, of perhaps the most famous *cause célèbre* of all time, and known in the annals of French jurisprudence as the *Affaire du Collier*.

Just as the Countess de la Motte was, to some extent, the imitator of certain female swindlers of her own era, so has she found imitators in this our own time. Almost at the moment we are writing Paris is talking about an act of swindling which bears a certain resemblance to the Diamond Necklace fraud.

It seems that, in the month of February, 1866, a jeweller in Paris, M. Cramer, received a letter sealed with the Prussian arms, and signed "Comte de Schaffgotsch," chamberlain of her majesty the Queen of Prussia, in which he was asked if he was willing to undertake the execution of some models, in brilliants, of a new Order which the Queen of Prussia intended to create. The jeweller immediately accepted the commission, and some days afterwards there arrived some drawings understood to have been executed by the queen herself. The jeweller set to work forthwith, and in a few weeks afterwards he transmitted to Berlin a magnificent cross surrounded with diamonds. In reply, he received a letter of congratulation accompanied by an order for a dozen more diamond crosses, with a further promise of an order for the crown of the Prince of Hohenzollern as sovereign of the Danubian Principalities. The jeweller was the happiest of men. His fortune was evidently made; but when and how was he to forward the crosses? The count replied that he was just then charged with a diplomatic mission, and would be at Cologne on a particular day, when the decorations could be awaiting him at the chief banker's in that town.

The jeweller accordingly sends the crosses to the house of Oppenheim and Co., informing them that they were to

be delivered to the chamberlain of the Queen of Prussia. Some days afterwards the count informed the bankers by letter that he would pass through the town at a certain hour, and begged of them to forward to him the jeweller's parcel by the hands of one of their clerks. This was accordingly done, and the jeweller is subsequently informed by letter that the Queen of Prussia is delighted with the crosses, some more of which her majesty requires.

But nothing was said as to payment, and the jeweller, uneasy in mind, did at last what he should have done at first. He called upon the Prussian ambassador at Paris, who informed him that he had been dealing with a knave, and that the letters were all forged. The jeweller, in a state of great consternation, sets out for Baden under the advice of the ambassador, obtains an audience of the queen, and is assured by her that she is an entire stranger to the whole story of the crosses.

On his return to Paris M. Cramer receives another letter from the pretended count, who insinuates this time that he might himself be decorated with the Order of the Red Eagle. The jeweller, however, was now on his guard. The police were communicated with, and they managed to draw the fox into the trap. He was found to be a man of good family, the son of an old general, and holding rank and title at the Prussian

court, but whom passion for gambling had ruined. The police seized, at the hotel where he put up in Paris, all the jeweller's letters, some diamonds detached from the crosses, with several visiting cards, having the name of the Count of Schaffgotsch on them, together with a blank stamp bearing the arms of the Queen of Prussia. Owing to the high connections of the culprit, the case will in all probability be compromised, and nothing more be heard of this last Diamond swindle.

XLV.

SUMMING UP OF THE EVIDENCE AGAINST MARIE-ANTOINETTE.

THE reader who has accompanied us step by step in our narrative, who has weighed our statements one by one, and noted the authorities on which these are based, is perhaps already satisfied of Marie-Antoinette's complete innocence of any kind of participation in the great fraud of the Diamond Necklace, and is convinced of the falsity of the charges brought against her with regard to her presumed intercourse with the Cardinal de Rohan. Should any doubt still linger in his mind, this will be removed, we imagine, on an examination of the annexed summary of facts. If we prove two things, that the queen was in no degree mixed up in the Necklace affair, and that she held no kind of intercourse with Madame de la Motte, then the whole of the countess's calumnies respecting the correspondence carried on between the queen and the cardinal, and their secret meetings at Little Trianon, necessarily fall to the ground.

Whatever may have been the follies, or say the crimes even, if you please, of which Marie-Antoinette was guilty, and which she more than expiated by her cruel death, complicity in any shape in this contemptible Diamond Necklace fraud is most certainly not one of them.

In the first place, if the Countess de la Motte had been that intimate confidant of the queen which she pretended she was, however secret their relations may have been, she would still have been able to have brought forward some shadow of proof of their existence, some trifling souvenir, for instance, the former possession of which might have been traced to Marie-Antoinette, some little scrap of her handwriting, even though undated and unsigned, some single witness who had once seen her in the queen's presence, or in the queen's apartments, even though this had been a discarded servant, such as the "*bonne citoyenne*," the "*excellente patriote*," Reine Millot, who deposed against her royal mistress at her trial. Evidence directly compromising the queen in the Necklace affair would perhaps not have been forthcoming at the time of the process, even if it had been the interest of either party to have produced it, but during the long years of the Revolution, when the name and memory of Marie-Antoinette were objects of the bitterest hate and scorn, some one among

the many individuals acquainted with the intrigues of the court might have been expected to have broken this forced silence, if from no other motive than personal vanity.

And yet not a scintilla of evidence, true or false, against the queen has come to light. In none of the memoirs of the time, written by those who had opportunities of knowing something of the facts, do we find the slightest accusation against the queen with regard to the Diamond Necklace. No one has stated that she was ever seen either with the Necklace itself, or any of the loose diamonds composing part of it, in her possession. No one connected with the court, neither Besenval nor De Lauzun, both on terms of closest intimacy with, and both, to some extent, detractors of the queen, has stated that Madame de la Motte was ever once seen in the queen's company, but all who have made allusion to her, like Lacretelle, Besenval, and Madame Campan, have stated precisely the reverse.* If she was in almost daily communication with the queen, as she pretended was the case, she must have been constantly seen by some of the inferior servants; her friend the gate-keeper of Little Trianon, for instance, or the *valet de chambre*, Desclos, who, when the queen had perished by the

* See *ante*, vol. i. p. 92, *et seq.*

guillotine, and there was no longer any motive for preserving silence, would have talked of the affair for talking's sake.

What, we may ask, could have been the motive that instigated Marie-Antoinette to obtain possession of the Necklace? It was certainly not for the purpose of wearing it, for no one ever pretended to have seen it on her person. It was not with the object of selling it piecemeal, to stave off some pressing pecuniary difficulty, for the De la Mottes had the whole of the proceeds; and in none of the contradictory statements made by them did they ever pretend they were selling the diamonds on the queen's behalf. The statement the count made to the jewellers was, that he inherited the diamonds from his mother; then their joint statement was, that they sold them on behalf of the cardinal; their final statement was, that they were a present to the countess from the queen, the wage in fact for the dishonourable service which she so unblushingly asserts she rendered to Marie-Antoinette. Supposing the queen to have had some motive for possessing the Necklace which we cannot penetrate, would she have purchased it through such a doubtful pair of agencies as the Countess de la Motte and the Cardinal de Rohan? The French court's resources may have been impoverished, still the royal credit was not yet at a discount;

and even if the queen could not have acquired the Necklace on her own terms of credit, considering the readiness with which *fermier-général* Béranger parted with his two hundred thousand francs, she would have had no difficulty in raising whatever amount she required among men of his stamp, such as Baudard de Saint-James and others.

As there is no direct evidence of the queen's having ever had the Necklace, or any of the diamonds belonging to it, let us see what indirect evidence there is that they were never in her possession.

On the 1st of February, 1785, Böhmer and Bassenge deliver the Necklace to the cardinal, who states that it was handed over the same evening to some man professing to be the bearer of a note from the queen, by Madame de la Motte in his presence. The cardinal asserts the man to have been Rétaux de Villette, and the countess's maid-servant deposes to having admitted him to her mistress's apartment just about the hour named. On the 8th of February, within the week, the negotiation with Bette d'Etienville is opened, and he is soon after applied to to go to Holland, and dispose of a large quantity of diamonds. On February 12, the countess commissions Villette to sell some of the diamonds which belonged to the Necklace, and on the 15th he is found offering them for sale. Early in March the count gives

Furet, the clock-maker, two diamonds, on account of some clocks he purchased of him; and shortly afterwards the countess is found selling diamonds to both Paris and Regnier, the jewellers, and leaving other diamonds with the latter to have reset. On the 10th of April the count goes to London, having with him, according to Gray, *fully half* of the diamonds belonging to the Necklace, and among them *all the more valuable ones.* Of this half, Gray states that he bought upwards of two-thirds.

Count de la Motte, in his narrative, admits having sold to Gray what he calls the eighteen oval stones, also thirteen stones of the first quality, six stones forming the two trefoils, four stones between the rose and tassels, sixteen stones from the tassels, in all fifty-seven stones. But Gray, in his declaration, states that he bought eight stones from the *fil autour* (the row of diamonds that encircled the neck), the large pendant brilliant suspended to the centre festoon, eighty of the stones forming the *esclavage,* some (say one-half) of the brilliants forming the two bands at the sides, namely, forty-eight; also four stones at the heads of the tassels, twelve stones from the lower part of the tassels, and thirty smaller stones also belonging to the tassels, in all one hundred and eighty-three stones (instead of fifty-seven according to the count's version), and for which

Count de la Motte received in money and account about two hundred and sixty thousand francs. The count admits having given to Gray twenty-eight stones to set as drop earrings, twenty-two stones from the scollops to make into a necklace, and the button stone to set as a ring, in all sixty-one stones. This admission tallies with Gray's declaration.

Madame de la Motte admits having sold to Paris first twenty-two and then sixteen stones, in all thirty-eight stones, for which she received thirty-one thousand francs. The count also admits having changed with Furet two of the scollop stones, for which he was allowed two thousand seven hundred francs, having sold or given to Regnier to mount sixteen stones from the tassels, twenty-four very small stones from the sides of the oval stones at the bottom of the tassels, twenty-eight stones encircling the oval pendants, two small stones on each side of the button, six small stones supporting the oval stones between the scollops, and twelve small stones immediately adjoining the ribbon at the top, in all eighty-eight stones. The eight stones encircling the button, and the four stones which supported the tassels, the count admits having in his possession, but they were not at this time unmounted.

In addition to the foregoing we must not omit to note the forty small stones which were intrusted to

Villette to sell, and for which, no doubt, a market had been long since found in Paris.

The diamonds, therefore, which the De la Mottes themselves admitted the possession of, and those which were proved to have been in their hands, seem to have been as follows:

Sold to Gray	183
Mounted by Gray	61
Sold to Paris	38
Exchanged with Furet	2
Sold to, and mounted by Regnier . .	88
In Count de la Motte's possession . .	12
Intrusted to Villette to sell . . .	40
	424

As the Necklace contained six hundred and twenty-nine stones, and four hundred and twenty-four of these were traceable to the De la Mottes, leaving less than one-third to be accounted for, it follows that Count de la Motte's statement, to the effect that the queen, or say anybody else even, had "kept two hundred and fifty-six diamonds, comprising the most beautiful part of the Necklace, with ninety-eight small diamonds, and the two finest diamonds of the first size,"* in all three hundred and fifty-six diamonds, was, like the generality of his statements respecting the Necklace, a gross lie.

* See *ante*, p. 230.

The diamonds parted with seem to have realized the following amounts:

Gray . .	260,000	francs.
Paris . .	31,000	„
Furet . .	2,700	„
Regnier . .	27,000	„
	320,700	francs, or nearly £12,500.

Madame de la Motte, in her second memorial, puts down the amount received from Paris at 38,000 francs, and from Regnier, in money and account, 58,000 francs, an increase of 38,000 francs to the foregoing amount, or upwards of £1,500, bringing up the sum total to fully £14,000 sterling. If to this we add the value of what the count calls the button stone, for which one thousand guineas were offered him in England, and of the two large brilliants set by Regnier as rings, and valued by him at twenty-five thousand francs, together with the value of the necklace and earrings set by Gray, of the diamond-mounted *bonbonnière*,* of

* Beugnot in his "Mémoires" furnishes us with a description of this *bonbonnière*, to which, it will be remembered, both the Count and Countess make allusion. (See *ante*, vol. i. p. 235, vol. ii. pp. 27-8.) It would appear, from what Beugnot says, that it was never in the cardinal's possession, though it had been got up to play a part in the fraud which was being practised upon him. Beugnot insinuates that had the officers of justice been more expeditious in their movements, they would have found in Madame de la Motte's jewel-box

the pair of drop earrings set by Regnier, of the eight diamonds encircling the button, and the four others which supported the tassels, together with the forty small stones which Villette tried to sell, we shall arrive at a gross total little short of £20,000.

The Countess de la Motte states that, during one of her confrontations with the Cardinal de Rohan, she said out loud to him, in presence of the judges: "Ever since these gentlemen have been putting interrogatories to us, you know that neither you nor I have told them a word of truth:"* so far as she was concerned, possibly about the truest thing she ever said. To show how unworthy of credit the generality of her statements at

this *bonbonnière*, which he tells us he had admired there a dozen times. "It was," remarks he, "a black tortoiseshell box, surrounded by large diamonds, exactly alike, and of the finest water; the subject on the top of the box was a rising sun which dispersed the mists on the horizon; you touched a spring, and under this first subject was found a portrait of the queen, clothed in a simple white robe, (without any other ornament on her head than her hair, raised up in the fashion of the period, and two earrings falling on her neck one on either side,) and holding a rose in her hand, precisely in the same attitude and costume as the character played by Mdlle. d'Oliva in the park of Versailles. They would, moreover, have found in this box two of the cardinal's letters, from which they would have seen that the De la Mottes had made him hope for it, as a token of reconciliation with the queen, and would have seen, too, that they had given him all the details of this magnificent jewel."—Mémoires du Comte Beugnot, vol. i. p. 89.

* "Mémoires Justificatifs de la Comtesse de la Motte," p. 39.

the trial were, we will run rapidly through her examinations, and pick out simply such of her assertions as are contradicted by independent testimony, or which she subsequently contradicted herself. Of those numerous statements made by her which the cardinal maintained to be false, we shall say nothing.

Lie 1. That all she knew of D'Oliva was from casually meeting her in the Palais Royal (p. 22*). She never met her in the Palais Royal, as she herself subsequently admitted.

2. That she had never told D'Oliva she was a lady of the court, on terms of intimacy with the queen (p. 23).

3. That she had never shown D'Oliva letters purporting to have been written by the queen (p. 23). If not, why, at the confrontation, did she wink at D'Oliva, and make signs to her, at this part of her evidence? (p. 50).

4. That the entire story of dressing up D'Oliva to personate the queen, and of the midnight meeting in the park was a foolish and incredible fable, most wretchedly concocted by the cardinal (p. 23). Subsequently she admits its truth, but pretends the meeting was a mere pleasantry got up to quiet the cardinal

* These references are to the present volume, unless otherwise specified.

(p. 62). Afterwards, in her "Mémoires Justificatifs," she says it was all arranged at the suggestion of the queen. (See *ante*, vol. i. p. 132.)

5. That she never gave one thousand or three thousand francs, or any money whatever, to D'Oliva (p. 24). Putting aside D'Oliva's circumstantial statement, with dates and figures (vol. i. p. 125), Villette admitted having taken her three hundred francs on behalf of the countess, and Father Loth proved having taken another four hundred francs to her for her upholsterer.

6. That she never received either the fifty thousand or the hundred thousand francs which the Baron de Planta conveyed to her from the cardinal (p. 24). The Baron de Planta swore that he handed her both these amounts (p. 47). If she did not receive them, how else did she support her extravagant expenditure at this period of her career? Her stories about the liberal gifts she had received from distinguished persons were one by one proved to be false.

7. That the contract was never given to her to obtain the queen's approval and signature (p. 25).

8. That the said approval and signature were not written by any person she knew (p. 25). Villette confessed to having written them by her direction (p. 59), and thereby admitted he had been guilty of forgery,

which he would hardly have done had it not been the truth. Although Madame de la Motte adhered to her denial of these facts at all her examinations, in her "Life" (vol. i. p. 345) she admits that Villette forged both signature and *approuvés* in her presence.

9. That the story about the cardinal bringing the Necklace to her house, and the casket containing it being handed over to a person who came with a note professing to be from the queen, was absolutely false from beginning to end (p. 26). She subsequently admits the truth of all this in her "Mémoires Justificatifs." (See *ante*, vol. i. p. 193.)

10. That she received two boxes of diamonds from the cardinal in the presence of Cagliostro (p. 32). Cagliostro denied this, and Villette emphatically stated that Cagliostro was entirely innocent of any complicity in the Necklace affair (p. 61).

11. That the count went to England to sell the diamonds on behalf of the cardinal, and having done so, handed the cardinal on his return drafts for one hundred and twenty-one thousand francs and various articles of jewellery received in exchange (pp. 32-33). The countess in her "Life" says not a word of this, but asserts (vol. i. p. 355 *et seq.*) that she received the diamonds as a present from the queen, and showed them to the cardinal, by whose advice she sent her husband

abroad to sell them on her own, certainly not on the cardinal's account.

12. That she neither knew nor suspected that any of the diamonds sold by her and her husband formed portions of the Necklace (p. 34). She had previously stated the diamonds sold did belong to the Necklace.

13. That she never gave thirty thousand francs to the cardinal to be handed to the jewellers (p. 35). For what purpose, then, did she borrow thirty-five thousand francs from her notary on the very day? It is true she states that she borrowed this amount to lend to Madame de Crussol, but why did she not call Madame de Crussol to prove the fact?

14. That she had no such transactions with Regnier as those deposed to by him (p. 43). When Regnier produces his books in support of his statement, she admits the whole of them, and attributes her former denial to her bad memory.

15. That Villette did not write any letters to the cardinal in the name of the queen (p. 61). Villette himself confessed to having written a considerable number (p. 60).

16. That she had previously deposed to having seen a letter in the hands of the cardinal, purporting to be from the queen, and saying, "The jewel is superb"

(p. 84). She had never deposed to anything of the kind.

17. That Laporte deposed she had told him a hundred times she would have nothing to do with the sale of the Necklace (p. 87). No such assertion as this is to be found in Laporte's deposition.

Of recent writers on the subject of the Diamond Necklace whose versions of the affair are considered damaging to the reputation of the queen, M. Louis Blanc* is the one to whom the most frequent reference is made. But M. Louis Blanc, no matter in whatever direction his sympathies may lie, is too honest a writer to wilfully misrepresent the truth. He does not assert, therefore, that the queen was a party to the fraud, although he insinuates that there are certain grounds for believing she was mixed up with the transaction. We propose, therefore, to examine the arguments which he brings forward inculpatory of the queen, and to see how far these are capable of being refuted.

In the arguments which M. Louis Blanc advances to prove that an intimacy subsisted between Madame de la Motte and the queen, and that the latter carried on an intrigue with the Cardinal de Rohan, and was a party to the purchase of the Necklace, although he does

* See his "Histoire de la Révolution Française," vol. ii.

not exactly maintain the genuineness of the letters said to have passed between the queen and the cardinal, he insinuates as much, and entirely ignores the fact of Villette's confession that these letters were written by him. The same may be said with regard to Madame de la Motte's presumed intimacy with Marie-Antoinette. She boasted, observes M. Louis Blanc, of her relations with the queen, which she would not have done had there been no foundation for them, for fear of the imposture being discovered; which is equivalent to saying that people will not tell lies for fear they should be found out, a proposition which the amount of falsehood current in the world proves to be untenable.

M. Louis Blanc dwells upon the fact of Madame de la Motte having desired the jewellers to be very cautious in their dealings with the cardinal, but he says nothing of the excellent use she put this to in her defence, and which proves she had an ulterior object in acting as she did. In like manner she made all she could of the circumstance of her having declined a commission on the sale of the Necklace. But what did she want with a commission?—she meant to have the Necklace itself. To receive a commission from the jewellers for having cheated them out of their property was a little too much for even the Countess de la Motte.

"The box containing the Necklace," says M. Louis

Blanc, "was given to Lesclaux, the queen's *valet de chambre.* The supposition is, that he was known to the cardinal, who parted with the box without taking any receipt for it."

The cardinal declared that Villette was the person to whom the box was given; and Villette was certainly there at the time, for the countess's *femme de chambre* proved having opened the door to him, and admitting him to Madame de la Motte's apartment. It is true that a striking difference existed between the individual described by the cardinal and Rétaux de Villette; but this proves but little, for if the countess could trick out a Palais Royal courtesan with sufficient art to palm her off upon the cardinal as Marie-Antoinette, whom the cardinal did know, she would certainly have been competent to transform the forger Villette into the fair-complexioned, light-haired, slim *valet de chambre* Lesclaux, whom the cardinal did *not* know.

M. Louis Blanc states Madame de la Motte informed the cardinal that the queen would acknowledge the receipt of the Necklace the next day by a secret sign, which was given, an important fact admitted by the Abbé Georgel himself.

We do not find that Madame de la Motte made any such statement. She says the queen wrote a note on the following day acknowledging the receipt of the

Necklace.* As to the secret sign, no one besides the Abbé Georgel, whose narrative M. Louis Blanc admits is full of grave errors, says a word about it, not even the cardinal.

As the time approached for the payment for the Necklace, Madame de la Motte, says M. Louis Blanc, manifests no anxiety.

She manifests every anxiety. She borrows thirty-five thousand francs from her notary on the security of her jewels, thirty thousand of which she takes to the cardinal for him to hand to the jewellers as interest on the purchase money, and thereby induce them to wait. She neither dines, nor sups, nor sleeps at home on that day, her anxiety is so great.

The cardinal declared to M. Baudard de Saint-James, says M. Louis Blanc, that he had seen in the queen's hands the seven hundred thousand livres destined for the first payment on account of the Necklace. Böhmer, too, informs Madame Campan that the cardinal had told him he had seen the queen take the money from a portfolio in a Sèvres porcelain secretary.

Presuming the cardinal to have said what is stated, it proves nothing against Marie-Antoinette. It was an exaggeration on his part of something which Madame

* "Life of the Countess de la Motte, by herself," vol. i. p. 349.

de la Motte had told him; in plain language a lie, told by him to reassure the jewellers and Baudard de Saint-James, who was one of their largest creditors.

The cardinal hides Madame de la Motte for fear she should let out the secret of the correspondence, and presses her to fly beyond the Rhine.

All this is denied by the cardinal, whose word is equally worthy of credit with that of the Countess de la Motte.

After the arrest of the cardinal Madame de la Motte refuses to fly.

It was three o'clock in the morning when, worn out by excitement and fatigue, she had great need of rest, and when she did not believe the danger so imminent as it proved to be, that she refused to fly. What she would have done a few hours later, had she not been arrested in the meanwhile, is another question.

The authorities refused to arrest Count de la Motte.

The police agents who arrested the countess had no instructions to arrest her husband, whose complicity in the fraud was not then suspected. The count, however, took good care not to allow them a second opportunity, for in a very few hours he made for the coast as fast as post horses could convey him.

Madame de la Motte's explanations of the confessions of D'Oliva and Villette, and of the deposition of

Gray the jeweller, are not allowed to figure in the process.

M. Louis Blanc has fallen into a grave error here. The countess's explanations of these different matters figure at full length in the verbatim reports of her two examinations, preserved in the imperial archives.* Gray's declaration, too, published in the cardinal's "Pièces Justificatives," was, we should imagine, filed by the registrar of the Court.

The silence of the queen on receiving the jeweller's letter of July 12th is regarded as evidence of her guilt.

Marie-Antoinette read this letter with no particular attention, and burnt it, says Madame Campan, the moment afterwards in her presence. There was a certain mystery in the language—the Necklace itself not being even mentioned—which, though it might have been clear enough to the queen had she been the purchaser of the jewel, was otherwise full of ambiguity. Besides, she had a firm conviction that Böhmer was somewhat touched in his head—a conviction, by the way, very generally entertained by persons about the court, and openly alluded to during the discussion on the sentence in the Court of Parliament (p. 102).

* No. X² 2576. See also the Appendix to Campardon's "Marie-Antoinette et la procès du Collier," pp. 271—389.

The cardinal's well-known diplomatic skill made it impossible for him to have been deceived.

Diplomatic skill counts for little against the arts and wiles of an intriguing woman, and one with whom, it must be remembered, her dupe was madly infatuated; for does not Beugnot tell us that, whilst glancing over some of the hundreds of letters from the Cardinal de Rohan to Madame de la Motte, he saw with pity "the ravages which the delirium of love, aided by that of ambition, had wrought on the mind of this unhappy man?"

Madame de la Motte endeavours to screen the queen.

Whatever she may have done at her preliminary examination, she did not screen the queen before the Court of Parliament, but pretended she had seen in the cardinal's possession two hundred letters written to him by Marie-Antoinette. All the countess's aim was to screen herself, no matter whom she sacrificed to attain this object.

Count de la Motte proclaims his intention of speaking the truth, but M. de Vergennes will not consent to his being brought to Paris.

When the trial was over, the count made a great parade of the evidence he could have given. He was too good a judge, however, to come forward at the trial. M. de Vergennes, moreover, could hardly have

refused his consent to the count's coming to Paris out of consideration for the queen, as he had long been her secret enemy and was an admitted partisan of the cardinal's.

The Princess de Lamballe visits the Salpêtrière, and gives alms to the superior for the countess.

We are unaware whence M. Louis Blanc derived this information. He gives no authority for it, and the countess herself makes no allusion to the circumstance either in her "Mémoires Justificatifs" or her "Life."

Count de la Motte is paid two hundred thousand livres to suppress the publication of the countess's "Mémoires Justificatifs."

No authority is given for this statement, and we doubt if any such large amount was ever paid. Still, whatever may have been the sum paid for the suppression of these "Mémoires," it proves nothing against the queen. Our own criminal records abound in instances of victims submitting to extortion for a long series of years, to save themselves from threatened exposure—to escape being accused of some degrading crime of which they are known to have been perfectly innocent.

It is no part of our plan to enter upon a defence of Marie-Antoinette against those other accusations which the bitter hatred of individuals and the fierce passions

of the time laid to her charge. One of her ablest defenders has said, that "all of youth, all of the woman, all of humanity in the unfortunate French queen, is explained by these words of the Prince de Ligne: 'The queen's pretended gallantry was nothing more than a sentiment of profound friendship for a few persons and a queen's womanly coquetry, which aimed at pleasing every one.'" Time, that rights all things, is at last doing Marie-Antoinette justice, and "she whom patriotism accused, and demagogism condemned, humanity has well nigh absolved."

APPENDIX.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DIAMOND NECKLACE, WITH ITS "ESCLAVAGE" AND TASSELS;

Based on the description given in the "Pièces Justificatives pour le Cardinal de Rohan," corrected by careful comparison with a *fac-simile* of the drawing of the Necklace prepared by the crown jewellers.

1. The *fil autour* (the row of diamonds encircling the neck), composed of seventeen brilliants, weighing from 18 to 33 grains each.

Count de la Motte says thirteen of these stones were bought by Gray (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 224), but the latter states that he only purchased eight. Two were set by Regnier as rings (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 215).

2. Forty-one brilliants, forming the three festoons suspended from the thread above, weighing from 12 to 20 grains each, estimating one with another.

Twenty-two of these were set by Gray, as a necklace for the countess (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 225); two were exchanged with Furet; one was set as a ring for the count; the remainder were sold to Paris (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 227).

3. Two pendant brilliants hanging from the side festoons, each weighing 50 grains.

The count says these were bought by Gray. Together with the other pendant brilliants, they formed part of the eighteen oval stones (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 220).

4. Two pendant brilliants hanging between the large and smaller festoons.

The count says these were also bought by Gray (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 220).

5. Six small stones supporting the above.

These were among the diamonds delivered by the count to Regnier (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 227).

6. A pendant brilliant, suspended from the thread above by a trefoil, and weighing 34 grains. A stone of superb quality.

The count says this was bought by Gray (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 220).

7. Fourteen brilliants surrounding the above, weighing 7⅛ carats.

Delivered by the count to Regnier (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 227).

8. Three brilliants, forming the trefoil, each weighing 13 grains.

These, with the stones of the second trefoil, must have been the six diamonds which the count speaks of as forming the rose of two oval ones (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 213), and which he says he exchanged with Gray (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 225).

9. A pendant brilliant, at the lower part of the centre festoon, hanging from a trefoil, and weighing 45 grains.

Bought by Gray (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 220).

10. Fourteen brilliants, surrounding the above, weighing 10 carats.

Delivered by the count to Regnier (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 227).

11. Three brilliants, forming the trefoil, weighing from 17 to 20 grains. Stones of extreme beauty.

Exchanged by the count with Gray (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 225).

12. One hundred and twenty-eight fine brilliants, forming the *esclavage* from the *fil* above to the knots of the two centre tassels; the stones all matching, and weighing 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 grains each.

Gray bought eighty of these.

13. Sixty-two small brilliants, inserted in the *esclavage*, weighing 3 and 4 grains each.

14. A brilliant, forming the centre of the rose in the middle of the *esclavage*. A very handsome stone, without the slightest flaw, weighing 45 grains.

This was the stone valued at one thousand guineas, which Gray set for the count as a ring (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 226).

15. Eight brilliants surrounding the above, weighing 12 and 13 grains each.

Retained by the count.

16. Ninety-six brilliants, forming the two side bands; the stones assorted, and weighing 6, 7, 8, and 9 grains each.

Half, or thereabouts, of these stones, were bought by Gray; twelve were delivered by the count to Regnier (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 227).

17. Forty-six small brilliants, inserted in the said bands, weighing 2 and 3 grains each.

These must have been the stones intrusted to Villette to dispose of.

18. Eight brilliants, at the heads of the tassels. Superb stones matching with each other, and weighing 14 and 15 grains each.

Four of these were bought by Gray.

19. Twelve pendant brilliants, hanging at the bottom of the tassels, remarkable for their whiteness, and weighing from 16 to 26 grains each.

Bought by Gray. They formed part of the eighteen oval stones (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 220).

20. Twenty-four very small stones at the sides of the above.

Delivered by the count to Regnier (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 228).

21. Sixteen round-shaped brilliants in the tassels, weighing from 11 to 14 grains each.

Delivered by the count to Regnier (see *ante*, vol. i. pp. 227-8).

22. Twelve round-shaped brilliants in the tassels, weighing from 8 to 10 grains each.

23. Thirty round-shaped brilliants in the tassels, weighing from 6 to 8 grains each.

Gray states that he bought the whole of these. The count says he only parted with sixteen (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 225).

24. Thirty round-shaped brilliants in the tassels, weighing from 4 to 6 grains each.

Twenty-eight of these were given to Gray, to mount as drop ear-rings (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 225).

25. Fifty-two small round-shaped brilliants in the tassels.

Twenty-two of the largest of these were sold to Paris; others the count had mounted for a watch-chain (see *ante*, vol. i. p. 227).

A SELECTION FROM THE LETTERS WHICH THE COUNTESS DE LA MOTTE PRETENDS PASSED BETWEEN THE QUEEN AND THE CARDINAL DE ROHAN.

FROM THE QUEEN TO THE CARDINAL.

April 28, 1784.

"I read with indignation the manner in which you have been deceived by your niece. I never had any knowledge of the letters you mention to me, and I question whether they ever existed. The persons you complain of have in reality contributed to your disgrace, but the methods they used to effect it were very different from those you suppose. I have forgotten all, and require of you never to speak to me of anything that has reference to what is past. The account which the countess has given me of your behaviour towards her has made a stronger impression on me than all you have written to me. I hope you will never forget that it is to her you are indebted for your pardon, as also for the letter I write to you.

"I have always looked upon you as a very inconsistent and indiscreet man, which opinion necessarily obliges me to great reservedness; and I own to you, that nothing but a conduct quite the reverse of that you have held can regain my confidence and merit my esteem."

FROM THE CARDINAL TO THE QUEEN.

May 6, 1784.

"Yes; I am the happiest mortal breathing! My *master* pardons me: he grants me his confidence; and, to complete my happiness, he has the goodness to smile upon his *slave*, and to give him public signals of a right understanding. Such unexpected favours caused in me so great an emotion, that I for a moment was apprehensive lest the motive should be suspected by the extraordinary answers which I made. But I soon recovered when I saw my absence of mind was attributed to quite another motive; upon which, I assumed an air of approbation, in order to divert observation from the real object. This circumstance is a warning to me, to direct henceforth my words and actions in a more prudential manner.

"I know how to appreciate all the obligations I am under to the charming countess. In whatever situation I may chance to be, I shall be gratefully mindful of all that she has done in my behalf. So much for that. All depends on my *master*. The facility he has of making beings happy, makes his *slave* wish for the means of following his footsteps and being the echo of his good pleasure."

FROM THE QUEEN TO THE CARDINAL.

May 15, 1784.

"I cannot disapprove of the desire you have of seeing me. I could wish, in order to facilitate you the means, to remove all obstacles that oppose it; but you would not have me act imprudently, to bring about more compendiously a thing which you must be persuaded you will shortly obtain.

"You have enemies who have done you much disservice with the *minister** (the countess will tell you the meaning of that word, which you must use for the future). The turning of them out cannot but be advantageous to you. I know the changes and revolutions that are to happen, and have calculated all the circumstances which will infallibly bring forward the opportunities which I desire. In the interim be very cautious, above all, discreet; and, as there is no foreseeing what may happen, be reserved, and greatly perplexed in what you hereafter write to me."

FROM THE CARDINAL TO THE QUEEN.

July 29, 1784.

"My adorable *master*, permit your *slave* to express his joy for the favours you have conferred upon him. That charming *rose* lies upon my heart. I will preserve it to my latest breath. It will incessantly recall to me the first instant of my happiness.

"In parting from the countess, I was so transported, that I found myself imperceptibly brought to the charming spot which you had made choice of. After having crossed the shrubbery, I almost despaired of knowing again the place where your beloved *slave* threw himself at your feet. Destined, no doubt, to experience during that delightful night none but happy sensations, I found again the pleasing turf, gently pressed by those pretty little feet. I rushed upon it as if you had still been there, and kissed with as much ardour your grassy seat, as that fair hand which was yielded to me with a grace and kindness that belong to

* The King.

none but my dear *master*. Enchanted, as it were, to that bewitching spot, I found the greatest difficulty in quitting it; and I should certainly have spent the night there, had I not been apprehensive of making my attendants uneasy, who knew of my being out.

"Soon after my return home, I went to bed, but pressed for a considerable time a restless pillow. My imagination, struck with your adorable person, was filled during my slumbers with the most delightful sensations. Happy night! that proved the brightest day in my life! Adorable *master*, your *slave* cannot find expressions to describe his felicity! You yesterday witnessed his embarrassment, his bashfulness, his silence, the natural effects of the most genuine love! You alone in the universe could produce what he never before experienced. Enveloped in these pleasing sensations, I sometimes imagine it to be only a visionary felicity, and that I am still under the influence of a dream; but, combining all the circumstances of my happiness, recalling to mind the enchanting sound of that voice which pronounced my pardon, I give way to an excess of joy, accompanied with exclamations, which, if they were overheard, would argue distraction. Such is my condition, which I deem supremely happy, and wish for its continuance the remainder of my life.

"I shall not depart till I have heard from you."

FROM THE QUEEN TO THE CARDINAL.

August 16, 1784.

"An observation made to me yesterday, with an air of curiosity and suspicion, will prevent my going to-day to T——

(Trianon), but will not, for all that, deprive me of seeing my amiable *slave*. The *minister* sets out at eleven, to go a hunting at R——— (Rambouillet): his return will be very late, or, to speak more properly, next morning. I hope, during his absence, to make myself amends for the tediousness and contradiction I have experienced for these two days past. Imprudent conduct has brought me to that pass, that I cannot, without danger, remove objects that are displeasing to me, and who haunt me. They have so thoroughly studied me, and know so little how to feign and dissemble, that they attribute my change to nothing but a discretion, which to them appears blameworthy; it is therefore very essential to be on one's guard, to avoid all surprise.

" The daring question put to me, persuades me that my confidence has been abused, as well as my good-nature, and that advantage has been taken of circumstances to fetter my will. I have a way of coming at information concerning it, but I will first consult thee. As thou wilt play the principal part in the scheme I have devised, we must needs agree as well on this point as we did last Friday on the S——. This comparison will make thee laugh, no doubt; but, as it is a just one, and I desire to give thee a proof of it to-night, before we talk of serious matters, observe exactly what follows: Do thou assume the garb of a messenger, and, with a parcel in thy hand, be walking about at half-past eleven under the porch of the chapel: I will send the countess, who shall serve thee for a guide, and conduct thee up a little back staircase to an apartment, where thou wilt find the object of thy desires."

FROM THE QUEEN TO THE CARDINAL.

January 15, 1785.

"If it had not been my intention there should be a mystery in the purchase of the jewel, I certainly should not have employed you to procure it for me. I am not accustomed to enter thus into treaty with my jewellers, and this way of proceeding is so much the more contrary to what I owe to myself, as two words were sufficient to put me in possession of that object. I am surprised that you dare to propose to me such an arrangement; but let there be no more said about it. It is a trifle that has occasioned me to make a few reflections, which I will impart to you when opportunity offers. The countess will deliver to you your paper. I am sorry you have given yourself so much trouble to no purpose."

FROM THE QUEEN TO THE CARDINAL.

January 29, 1785.

"How is this? Affectation with me? Why, my friend, ought people in our predicament to act under restraint, to seek for shifts, and deal with insincerity? Dost thou know that thy reserve, and thy false pride, drew upon thee the letter thou hast received; and that but for the countess, who has told me all, I should have attributed that pretended arrangement to quite a different motive. Fortunately, all is cleared up. The countess will deliver thee the writing, and explain the motives by which I have been actuated in this matter. As I am supposed

ignorant of the confidence thou hast shewn her, as also of the token of trust that thou wilt give her, by laying before her our particular engagements, that is a more than sufficient reason to make thee secure, and remove all difficulties. Thou wilt keep the writing, and deliver it to none but me.

"I hope, notwithstanding my disorder, to see thee before the holiday. I expect the countess to-morrow. I will tell her whether I shall be able to receive from my *slave* the object which had nearly set us at variance."

FROM THE QUEEN TO THE CARDINAL.

July 19, 1785.

"I believe I have informed you of the disposal of the sum which I destined for the object in question, and that probably I should not fulfil the engagements till my return from Fontainebleau. The countess will remit to you thirty thousand livres, to pay the interest. The privation of the capital is to be taken into consideration, and this compensation will make them easy.

"You complain, and I say not a word: a very extraordinary circumstance; time will, perhaps, acquaint you with the motive of my silence. I do not love suspicious people, especially when there is so little reason for it. I possess a principle I never will recede from. Your last conversation is very opposite to what you related to me at a preceding period. Reflect upon it, and if your memory serves you faithfully, by comparing the eras, you will judge what I am to think of your pressing solicitations."

SOME SATIRICAL VERSES

TO WHICH THE NECKLACE AFFAIR GAVE RISE.

(From "Correspondance Secrète Inédite sur Louis XVI., Marie-Antoinette, la Cour et la Ville.")

I.

Voici venir le temps pascal,
Que pensez-vous du cardinal?
Opinez-vous qu'il chantera
Alleluia?

Le Saint-Père l'avait rougi,
La cour de France l'a noirci,
Le Parlement le blanchira:
Alleluia!

Que Cagliostro ne soit rien,
Qu'il soit Maltais, Juif ou Chrétien,
A l'affaire que fait cela?
Alleluia!

De Versailles comme à Paris,
Tous les grands et tous les petits
Veulent élargir Oliva:
Alleluia!

Planta, du fond de sa prison,
Demande grâce au bon Baron,
Qui lui dit qu'il y restera :
Alleluia !

De Valois le conte insensé,
Par un Collier fut commencé,
Un Collier le finira :
Alleluia !

Survient Villette l'écrivain,
Confus d'avoir prêté sa main
Comme La Motte l'exigea :
Alleluia !

Pour d'Etienville au teint vermeil,
A la Grève un coup de soleil
Sur l'épaule le frappera :
Alleluia !

Voilà l'histoire du procès
Qui de Paris cause l'accès ;
Nous dirons, quand il finira :
Alleluia !

II.

Illustre prisonnier, tirez-nous d'embarras :
Êtes-vous cardinal, ou ne l'êtes-vous pas ?
Hélas ! serait-ce vrai, que la cruelle Rome
Ait pu dans sa fureur dégrader un saint homme ?

Un Rohan ! Répondez. Vous détournez les yeux ;
Ah ! vous pleurez le sort de vos tristes cheveux.
Vous voilà donc réduit à la simple calotte !
Ce n'est pas le seul mal que vous ait fait La Motte.

III.

Target, dans un gros mémoire,
A traité tant bien que mal
La sotte et fâcheuse histoire
De ce pauvre cardinal,
Où sa verbeuse éloquence
Et son froid raisonnement
Prouvent jusqu'à l'indécence
Que c'est un grand innocent.

J'entends le sénat de France
Lui dire un de ces matins :
Ayez un peu de décence,
Et laissez là vos catins.
Mais le Pape, moins honnête ;
Pourra dire à ce nigaud :
Prince, à qui n'a pas de tête,
Il ne faut pas de chapeau.

IV.

Cagliostro, homme savant,
Enseigne au Prince la magie.
Ils n'étaient que deux seulement,
Mais par tour de socellerie,

Les violà trois : Qui l'eût prédit ?
De surprise ôtant sa calotte,
Le bon cardinal vit La Motte,
Et La Motte le vit.

V.

Malgré ce gros factum si souvent refondu,
Et l'arrêt de la cour si lestement rendu,
L'innocente candeur du prelat de Saverne
Brille comme un étr . . au fond d'une lanterne.

VI.

Des Valois La Motte est la fille,
On n'en peut douter :
Car un arrêt va lui faire porter
Les armes de sa famille.

MEMORIAL

CONCERNING THE HOUSE OF SAINT-REMI DE VALOIS, SPRUNG FROM THE NATURAL SON WHOM HENRI II., KING OF FRANCE, HAD BY NICOLE DE SAVIGNY, LADY AND BARONESS DE SAINT-REMI.

ARMS OF THE HOUSE DE SAINT-REMI DE VALOIS.

Argent with a fess azure, charged with three fleurs-de-luce or.

HENRI THE SECOND, King of France, had by Nicole de Savigny,* Henry de Saint-Remi, that follows. The said Nicole de Savigny, styled High and Puissant Lady, Lady of Saint-Remi, Fontette, du Chatellier and Noez, married Jean de Ville, Knight of the King's Order, and made her last will on the 12th of January, 1590, in which she declared, "That the late King Henri the Second had made a donation to Henri Monsieur, his son, the sum of 30,000 crowns sol. which she had received in 1558."

II. DEGREE. *Fourth Progenitor.*] Henri de Saint-Remi, called Henri Monsieur, is styled High and Puissant Lord,

* "Genealogical History of the House of France," by Father Anselme, vol. i. p. 136; "History of France," by the President Henault, third edition, in quarto, p. 315.

Knight, Lord of the Manors and Baron du Chatellier, Fontette, Noez and Beauvoir, Knight of the King's Order, Gentleman of the Bed-chamber in Ordinary, Colonel of a regiment of horse, and of foot, and Governor of Chateau-Villain; married by contract October 31, 1592, articled at Essoyes, in Champagne, Dame Christiana de Luz, styled High and Puissant Lady, relict of Claude de Fresnay, Lord of Loupy, Knight of the King's Order, and daughter of the Hon. Jacques de Luz, also Knight of the King's Order, and of Lady Michelle du Fay, Lord and Lady of Bazoilles; died at Paris on the 14th of February, 1621, and had of his marriage the son who follows:

III. DEGREE. *Third Progenitor.*] Renatus de Saint-Remi, styled High and Puissant Lord, Knight, Lord and Baron de Fontette, Gentleman in Ordinary to the King's Bed-chamber, Captain of a hundred men-at-arms, died March 11, 1663, and had married, by articles entered into April 25, 1646, at Essoyes, Jacquette Brevau, by whom, amongst others, he had the following son:

IV. DEGREE. *Great Grandfather.*] Peter Jean de Saint-Remi de Valois, styled High and Puissant Lord, Knight, Lord of Fontette, Major of the regiment of Bachevilliers' horse, was born September 9, 1649, and baptized at Fontette, October 12, 1653; married first to Demoiselle Reine Margaret de Courtois, and a second time by articles passed on January 18, 1673, at St. Aubin, in the diocese of Toule, to Demoiselle Marie de Mullot, daughter of Messire Paul de Mullot, and of Dame Charlotte de Chaslus, died before the 14th of March, 1714; and of his second marriage had a son, who follows:

V. DEGREE. *Grandfather.*] Nicolas Renatus de Saint-Remi de Valois, styled Knight, Baron de Saint-Remi, and Lord of Luz, was baptized at Saint Aubin-aux-Auges, in the diocese of Toule, the 12th of April, 1678, served the King during ten years, as *garde-du-corps* to his majesty, in the Duke de Charost's company, quitted the service to marry by articles of the 14th of March, 1714, Demoiselle Marie Elisabeth de Vienne, daughter of Nicolas Francis de Vienne, Knight, Lord and Baron de Fontette, Noez, &c., counsellor to the King, president, Lieutenant-general in matters both civil and criminal, in the royal Bailiwick of Bar-sur-Seine, and of Dame Elisabeth de Merille, died at Fontette, on the 3rd of October, 1759; and of his marriage had two sons: first, Peter Nicholas Renatus de Saint-Remi de Fontette, born at Fontette, June 3, 1716, received in 1744, a Gentleman cadet in the regiment of Grassin, where it is assured he was killed in an engagement against the king's enemies; and second, Jacques, who follows:

VI. DEGREE. *Father.*] Jacques de Saint-Remi de Valois, first called de Luz, and afterwards de Valois, styled Knight, Baron de Saint-Remi, was born at Fontette, December 22, 1717, and baptized January 1, 1718. In his baptismal attestation, which contains his name and condition, his father, thereat present, is called and styled, "Messire Nicolas Renatus de Saint-Remi de Valois, Baron de Saint-Remi;" and his aunt, who was one of the sponsors, is therein called "Demoiselle Barbe Thérèse, daughter of the late Messire Peter Jean de Saint-Remi de Valois." Both of them signed their names to it, Saint-Remi de Valois. He espoused, in the parish church of St. Martin, at Langres, on the 14th of August, 1755, Marie Jossel, by whom he

already had a son, who follows: and died at the Hôtel Dieu, in Paris, February 16, 1762, according to the register of his death, in which he is called and styled, "Jacques de Valois, Knight, Baron de Saint-Remi."

VII. DEGREE. *Procreating.*] Jacques de Saint-Remi de Valois, born February 25, 1755, and baptized the same day in the parochial church of St. Peter and St. Paul, in the city of Langres; acknowledged and baptized by his father and mother in the act of their espousals of the 14th of August, of the same year.

Jeanne de Saint-Remi de Valois, born at Fontette, July 22, 1756.

Marianne de Saint-Remi de Valois, born also at Fontette, October 2, 1757.

We, Antoine, Marie d'Hozier de Sérigny, Knight, Judge at Arms of the nobility of France, Knight, Honorary Grand Cross of the Royal Order of St. Maurice of Sardinia, do certify unto the King, the truth of the facts certified in the above Memorial drawn up by us from authentic records.

In witness thereof, we have signed the present certificate, and caused it to be countersigned by our Secretary, who has put to it the seal of our arms.

Done at Paris, on Monday, the 6th day of the month of May, in the year 1776:

Signed D'HOZIER DE SÉRIGNY:

By Monsieur the Judge at Arms of the Nobility of France. *Signed* DUPLESIS.

We, the undersigned Judge at Arms of the Nobility of France, &c., do certify that this copy of the present

Memorial is conformable to the record preserved in our repository of Nobility; in witness whereof we have signed it, and caused it to be countersigned by our secretary, who has affixed to it the seal of our arms.

Done at Paris, on Thursday, the 13th day of the month of October, in the year 1785.

Signed D'HOZIER DE SÉRIGNY:
By Monsieur the Judge at Arms of the Nobility of France. *Signed* DUPLESIS.

THE END.

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